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STRICTURES

ON

Lt. Col. Tarleton's Hiſtory.

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STRICTURES
ON
Lt. Col. Tarleton's Hiſtory

"OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1780 AND 1781, IN THE
"SOUTHERN PROVINCES OF NORTH AMERICA."

"*Parturiunt montes, naſcetur ridiculus mus.*"—HOR.

WHEREIN

MILITARY CHARACTERS AND CORPS ARE VINDICATED FROM INJURIOUS ASPERSIONS, AND SEVERAL IMPORTANT TRANSACTIONS PLACED IN THEIR PROPER POINT OF VIEW.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND,

BY

RODERICK MACKENZIE,
LATE LIEUTENANT IN THE 71ſt REGIMENT.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DETAIL OF THE SIEGE OF NINETY SIX,

AND THE

RE-CAPTURE OF THE ISLAND OF NEW-PROVIDENCE.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR;
AND SOLD BY R. JAMESON, STRAND; R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET; T. AND J. EGERTON, CHARING-CROSS; AND T. SEWELL, CORNHILL.

M DCC LXXXVII.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

FRANCIS LORD RAWDON,

BARON RAWDON,

AID-DE-CAMP TO THE KING, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

THE following letters were written at the requeſt of a friend in the country, for the ſole purpoſe of detecting error, and rendering

a

dering juſtice to many of the firſt characters in the Britiſh army.

The attention ſhewn by your Lordſhip to the officers wounded at the diſaſtrous affair of Cowpens, among whom the author had the misfortune to be, contributed to impreſs him with the ſame exalted ideas of your humanity that he had before entertained of your military talents. To your Lordſhip's candour he ſubmits his motive for engaging in this undertaking, and to your judgment the obſervations contained in the following ſheets; convinced, that if they meet with your approbation, it will enſure that of

every

every officer who ſerved during the late war in America—ONE only excepted,

With all that reſpect and deference which powers of mind, no leſs than exalted birth claim, I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt obedient and

moſt humble ſervant,

RODERICK MACKENZIE.

King-ſtreet, St. James's-ſquare,
November, 1787.

ADVERTISEMENT.

STRUCK with the numerous incoherencies, misrepresentations, and contradictions, contained in the work which is the subject of the ensuing letters, the author had given way to the first emotion of his mind, and submitted to publick inspection several cursory remarks, through the medium of the Morning Post, under the signature of "An Officer on that Service." But now, that he has taken a fuller survey

of the ſubject, he conſiders himſelf at liberty to reſume ſuch of his former arguments as he may find conducive to the elucidation of facts in this publication.

E R R A T A.

Page 93, for "ſo as to form *in* the line," read "ſo as to "form *with* the line."

Page 153, for "pitiful *recourſe*," read "pitiful *reſource*."

STRICTURES

ON

LIEUT. COL. TARLETON's HISTORY.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,

ANXIOUS to revive a correſpondence which has ever afforded me the moſt cordial ſatisfaction, and emboldened by your indulgent opinion, inclination ſtrongly impels me, however diſtruſtful of my own talents, to comply with your requeſt. Let me apprize you

 then,

then, not to expect that elegant conciſeneſs, which marks the diction of a fine writer. The following letters contain only plain obſervations; but theſe are deduced from ſuch ſtubborn facts, as will, it is hoped, fully impreſs your mind with conviction. In place of nervous deſcription, accept remarks, which do not infringe the dictates of truth; and ſuch, you will readily allow, are moſt congenial to the feelings of a generous heart.

Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's *Hiſtory* of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America, has been peruſed with an avidity proportionate to the ideas once formed of his military capacity. The very title ſtrongly awakens curioſity; but when the firſt tranſports are allayed, when the ſtorm of paſſion ſubſides, a ſucceeding calm leaves full ſcope to the judgment, to ſcrutinize the ſubject with the ſtricteſt impartiality, and by placing the deſign in its cleareſt point of view, enables us,

on

on the moſt ſolid grounds, to confirm or reverſe our firſt opinion.

This elaborate performance, though ingeniouſly worked up, abounds with miſrepreſentation and error; it does injuſtice to a number of reſpectable officers; wantons in reflecting unmerited diſgrace on entire corps of the army, and is replete with palpable inconſiſtencies. When public opinion is thus miſled by conſummate artifice, it becomes neceſſary to detect the ſophiſtry which produced the deception.

The work before us would have appeared with better grace, and a juſter title to general favour, if ſelf-importance had been leſs predominant with the author; if the magnanimity and fall of many invaluable officers had been candidly recorded, and their names tranſmitted to poſterity, as men conſpicuous for having exerted themſelves in the ſervice of their country. All inſtances of military proweſs ſhould have been diſtinctly pointed

out, in a performance calculated to attract public attention. When even the ableſt artiſt is too partial to any particular figure in a landſcape, an accurate and perſpective view of its component parts, muſt fix the criterion for deciſion.

You know that I ſerved on the campaigns which this gentleman deſcribes; you have heard me bear teſtimony to his perſonal courage and activity; and you alſo know, that having quitted the army ſince the peace, I have nothing either to hope or fear from Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton on the one hand, or from the characters he traduces on the other. You will allow me, therefore, to be diſintereſted, and not actuated by any ſiniſter intention. It is no reflection on a Britiſh ſoldier, that he does not poſſeſs the diſcriminating talents of a Hume, a Stewart, or a Gibbons, to colour his actions with that perſuaſive ſkill and poliſhed diction, which are the ſatellites of true genius; but when he deſcribes the progreſs of a war, and ventures to expa-

tiate on the primary motives which influenced oppoſing commanders, we naturally expect, at leaſt, obſervations founded on experience and judgment.

Without dwelling too much on punctilios, or making particular inquiry, whether a narrative of military events, evidently deficient in point of information, and frequently erroneous, can merit the dignified epithet of HISTORY, I ſhall conſider this work, merely, as a journal of the war in the Southern provinces; and viewing it on this ground ſolely, it is impoſſible to avoid being ſtruck with its partiality and incorrectneſs. Some facts have been withheld, and ſome mutilated; while others are raiſed to a pitch of importance, to which, if hiſtorical juſtice had been the author's object, they are by no means entitled. Prejudice and party ſpirit are alſo ſome of its moſt prominent features.

Nothing is more falſe than an opinion which once prevailed in the world, that

the truth of an hiſtorical narrative, is in proportion to the nearneſs of the hiſtorian's life, to the times of the ſeveral tranſactions which he relates, and conſequently, that every hiſtorian, cotemporary with the agents and actions which he deſcribes, has the beſt chance of bringing out the truth: on the contrary, the ſprings of human actions, and eſpecially of thoſe which are governed by the intricate and ſecret motives of Princes and Privy Councils, are not to be developed but by time, patience, labour, and mature diſcernment. The annals of hiſtory will ſhew, that all ſenſe of perſonal injury, and party reſentment, muſt be obliterated from the mind, and men muſt recover themſelves from the ſhocks which diſſolved the bonds of ſociety, before the ſprings of any revolution can be traced to their primary ſource, and before the true characters of the principal agents can be clearly delineated. For the truth of theſe obſervations, we need only have recourſe to a compariſon of the earlieſt and lateſt accounts of the reign of the unfor-

unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. In the former, factions, calumny, and ignorance, exhibited her as a beautiful demon; and it was only after the lapſe of near two centuries, that writers of honour, diſcernment, and veracity *, were enabled to penetrate the thick cloud of miſrepreſentation, and to place that much-injured Princeſs in the genuine light, which juſt and impartial hiſtory reflects.

The peruſal of the following letters will diſcover, that our author was deſtitute of many qualifications eſſential to his undertaking; and to ſupply theſe material defects, he appears to ſubſtitute a profeſſional experience, ſo limited, as ſcarcely to exceed the duration of a butterfly's exiſtence †.

* Goodall, Tytler, Steuart, and Whitaker.

† Natural Hiſtorians relate, that this inſect is, in the firſt period of its exiſtence, a crawling grub; in the ſecond, a fluttering uſeleſs fly; and that in the third—it dies.

With reſpect to the charges exhibited againſt Earl Cornwallis, it is neither my province to enter into a full vindication of his Lordſhip's conduct, nor to inquire into the cauſes of thoſe charges being brought forward, with an acrimony ſo ſtrongly marked, at ſo late a period. Similar indulgence is however expected in inveſtigating ſome accuſations preferred againſt that nobleman, as when defending officers under his command. Indirect cenſures are frequently uſed againſt his Lordſhip; ſuch wound more deeply than ſpecifick attacks, becauſe their poignancy is artfully concealed, and often produces a much more dangerous effect, than avowed and implacable reſentment. To aſperſe his Lordſhip's military capacity, is inſidious to a degree; and to condemn the meaſures which he purſued in America, at a time, when the unlimited confidence of his country has again ſingled him out for a truſt of the higheſt importance, and placed him at ſuch a diſtance* from

* Earl Cornwallis was, at the time that Lieutenant Colonel

from all poſſibility of defending himſelf, is truly ungenerous. It is equally unbecoming to point ſuch unmerited cenſures, at ſo reſpectable a ſoldier, ſo invaluable a patron, and ſo ſincere a friend.

Truſting to your candour and judgment, I ſubmit the following STRICTURES on this work to your conſideration, and have no doubt but you will coincide with me in opinion, that nothing can compenſate for want of veracity in an hiſtorian, and that the blandiſhments of diction are but wretched ſubſtitutes for the language of truth.

With every ſentiment of friendſhip,

I am

Your moſt faithful

And obedient ſervant.

Colonel Tarleton publiſhed his Hiſtory, and is at preſent, Governor General in India.

LETTER

LETTER II.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU are now furniſhed with my general ſentiments, reſpecting the performance before us; the merits and demerits of its poſitions and concluſions, next claim our attention.

The important diſplay of political knowledge, affected in the exordium, is, doubtleſs, intended to ſhew the author's ſuperior judgment and information. He would be thought as great in the cabinet as in the field. He appears familiar with the

the deſigns of foreign powers, and treats Lord North's adminiſtration, in conducting the American war, with great freedom*. For my part, I am unacquainted with the arcana imperii; the deep diſcernment of a Machiavel is not, however, wanted to detect the extreme abſurdity of the following concluſions. After diſclaiming farther political diſquiſition, he reaſons thus, pages 2 and 3:

"In the autumn of the year 1779, "Congreſs was conſiderably advanced in "credit and power by the military com- "bination in Georgia. The appearance "of the French, although the attack "upon Savannah was not crowned with "ſucceſs, reanimated the expiring vigour "of the deſponding Americans, and con- "firmed the attachment of the un- "ſteady."

The combination to which our author

* Vide page 2.

alludes,

alludes, is conceived to mean, that of the French army under the Count de Eſtaign, with the Americans commanded by General Lincoln, in the month of September 1779. The Count ſailed from Cape François, in the iſland of Hiſpaniola, with a formidable armament, and landed in Georgia at the head of five thouſand regular troops, and an adequate train of artillery. He was ſoon joined by, perhaps, an equal number of Americans. This united force was repulſed and totally routed, by leſs than three thouſand ſoldiers and ſeamen, before the unfiniſhed works of Savannah. It is therefore highly inconſiſtent to infer, that the cauſe of America could have derived ſupport from ſuch diſaſter and diſgrace.

The author's poſitions being admitted, we muſt believe that the gallant Tawſe fell, and Prevoſt, Maitland, Glazier, Cruger, Hamilton and Moncreif fought, in vain; and from ſuch concluſions we are to learn, that the brilliant ſucceſs of his

his Majeſty's arms tended only to aggrandize his enemies. Doctor Ramſey was at that time, and probably now is, a delegate to the Continental Congreſs. He has publiſhed a work, entitled, "An "Hiſtory of the Revolution of South "Carolina." I by no means ſubſcribe to all his concluſions, but in the preſent inſtance, he, from his ſituation, muſt have been a competent judge of the ſtate of American affairs, and in what manner they were affected by this cataſtrophe. The Doctor ſays, Vol. II. page 42, "The ſiege being raiſed, the Continental "troops retreated over the river Savan-"nah. A depreſſion of ſpirits ſucceeded, "much increaſed by the preceding ele-"vation. The Georgian exiles, who had "arrived from all quarters to re-poſſeſs "themſelves of their eſtates, were a ſe-"cond time obliged to abandon their "country, and ſeek refuge among ſtran-"gers. The currency depreciated much "faſter than ever, and the moſt gloomy "apprehenſions reſpecting the Southern

"ſtates

"ſtates generally took poſſeſſion of the "minds of the people."---And again, page 46, "The repulſe at Savannah, on the 9th "of the preceding October, impreſſed "the inhabitants with high ideas of the "power of Britain."

Diveſt yourſelf now of prejudice in favour of either of theſe gentlemen, and then decide whether the power and credit of Congreſs could poſſibly derive ſupport, or the expiring vigour of the Americans, reanimation, from the overthrow of their friends and allies. But I forbear farther remarks on the firſt five pages of this work, which are entitled to peculiar delicacy; for, upon examination of the whole performance, it will be found, that he ſeldom ſuffers an equal number of ſucceeding ones to paſs, without exhibiting himſelf, as the principal figure in the fore-ground of the picture.

The author, in reaſoning on ſome ſubſequent operations of the American army,

is

is as unfortunate as in his preceding remark. He ſays, pages 13 and 14, "The "body of regular troops, deſtined for "this ſervice (the protection of Charleſ-"town), though aſſiſted by the militia "and inhabitants, was ſcarcely adequate "to the defence of ſuch extenſive forti-"fications, and could have been more "uſefully employed in the field, where "judicious operations, aſſiſted by the re-"ſources to be found in the country, and "by the approaching heat of the ſeaſon, "would have protected the greateſt part "of the fertile province of South Caro-"lina, would have ſoon over-balanced "the preſent ſuperiority of the Britiſh "forces, and would effectually have pre-"vented the co-operation of the Royal "navy and army. General Waſhington "adopted this line of action, when he "abandoned New-York Iſland for the "Jerſies."

The misfortunes of General Lincoln, who commanded at Charleſtown, certainly

tainly entitle him to ſome tenderneſs from a generous obſerver of his actions. He undertook the defence of that place, by the direction of thoſe in whoſe ſervice he was engaged, nor did his mode of conducting it do him any diſcredit. The Congreſs was ſo attentive to the ſafety of this important garriſon, that they propoſed the remarkable expedient of arming the ſlaves; and the legiſlature of South Carolina inveſted Mr. Rutledge with the unlimited powers of a Dictator, to give energy to his government, upon this extraordinary emergency*. Of the political propriety of maintaining this poſt, the Americans muſt have been more proper judges than our author, whoſe reaſoning upon the ſubject appears extremely erroneous. It cannot by any means be admitted, that ſix thouſand American troops, indifferently diſciplined, ſhould in any ſituation be able to counteract the meaſures of a Britiſh force,

* Vide Ramſey.

conſiſting

conſiſting of ten thouſand; and to aſſert that a few regiments, the weak ſtate of which is acknowledged by himſelf, would have actually prevented the co-operation of the Royal navy and army, is an abſurdity hitherto unparalleled. Whatever the faults of the American General might have been, it is obvious that his army, by quitting the only garriſon, and principal ſea-port in the province, and by retiring into the interior country, could not have retarded the above-mentioned co-operation. Such a meaſure, inſtead of dividing, would have enabled the Britiſh to concentrate their force.

The author's illuſtration is equally erroneous with his poſition. General Waſhington garriſoned the fortreſs which bore his name upon New-York Iſland, with three thouſand troops under General Magaw; he furniſhed it with magazines, and forty-one pieces of cannon of different calibers, beſides howitzers. The

place was ſummoned in vain, and then attacked by General Kniphauſen, Earl Percy, General Mathew, and Colonel Stirling, at the head of four ſeparate diviſions of the Britiſh army. The aſſailants had near four hundred men killed and wounded, and the fortreſs was not reduced, until Earl Percy carried one of the outworks by aſſault, Colonel Stirling another, and until Kniphauſen, having advanced cloſe to the parapet, was prepared to enter ſword in hand*. When theſe circumſtances are conſidered, it will appear, that General Waſhington did not abandon New-York Iſland for the Jerſies, from motives of policy, as this author aſſerts, but of neceſſity.

When falſe inferences like theſe, ſupported by erroneous illuſtrations, appear in the front of a performance, we liſten with caution to the ſequel, which indeed

* Vide General Howe's Official Letter of the 30th of November, 1776.

is

is the more neceſſary, when it is conſidered, that official diſpatches and private letters are adduced as vouchers, though theſe were written under impreſſions from erroneous reports, founded on miſrepreſentations by our author himſelf; the conſequence of which has been, that whole garriſons have fired vollies, bells have rung, and bonfires have been raiſed, to commemorate advantages which never exiſted.

Be aſſured that I am,

Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY laſt was principally levelled at the erroneous ſtatement of the conſequences which reſulted from the ſucceſsful defence of Savannah, and the effect which our author ſays an early evacuation of Charleſtown by General Lincoln would have produced. The advance of the Britiſh to that garriſon, its reduction, with ſome ſubſequent operations, have been deſcribed in his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton's diſpatches, with an accuracy which ſuperſedes the neceſſity

neceſſity of the very imperfect account publiſhed by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton.

It is generally admitted, that the love of fame is, or ought to be, the ruling paſſion of every ſoldier; and, perhaps, it has in a greater or leſſer degree, had a manifeſt influence in impelling this order of men to glorious actions, from a Leonidas at Thermopylæ, to our immortal Wolfe at the heights of Abraham. Of this the Corſican Chief PAOLI, when defending his native iſland from the attacks of a mercenary republick, appeared truly ſenſible. "He deviſed an excellent "method of promoting bravery among "his countrymen. He wrote a circular "letter to the prieſts of every pariſh in "the iſland, deſiring a liſt to be made "out of all thoſe who had fallen in "battle. No inſtitution was better con-"trived; it might be adopted by every "nation, as it would give double courage "to ſoldiers, who would have their fame

"preſerved, and at the ſame time leave "to their relatives the valuable legacy of "a claim to the kindneſs of the ſtate*."
In addition to this firſt principle, it certainly affords a melancholy ſatisfaction, to find in the page of hiſtory, that juſtice is done to the memory of the dead; it mingles ſympathy with the tears of the widow and orphan; it may encourage future ſoldiers to emulate the actions of their predeceſſors, whoſe lives may have been ſacrificed in the ſervice of their country; it alſo gives to the relations of theſe brave men, that claim to the kindneſs of the ſtate, which the Corſican hiſtorian has deſcribed. Liberal minds only are influenced by theſe exalted maxims; but let us conſider the light in which they have been viewed, by the journaliſt of the Southern American campaigns.

* Boſwel's Account of Corſica.

Deſcribing

Deſcribing the attack of the legion-infantry, when they miſtook the corps under the command of Major Ferguſon for enemies, pages 7 and 8, he entirely neglects to mention the wounds which that active officer received, though theſe were attended by a peculiarity of circumſtances, that long furniſhed the whole army with a melancholy topick of converſation. The Major had ſignalized himſelf in a conſpicuous manner at Brandywine; his right arm had been ſo much ſhattered in that action, as to be for ever after rendered uſeleſs; this misfortune, however, did not deprive him of his talents for vigorous exertion: he rendered himſelf maſter of the ſword with his left. On the preſent occaſion he defended himſelf againſt three ſoldiers, who oppoſed him with fixed bayonets, but receiving a wound in his only arm, he was on the point of falling, when Major Cochran, fortunately recognizing his voice, the miſtake was cleared up, and his invaluable life was for this time preſerved.

Our author is equally remiſs in his account of the loſs ſuſtained by the accident which befel the magazine in Charleſtown, page 23, as he has totally omitted to mention the deaths of Lieutenant Gordon of the royal artillery, and Lieutenant Macleod of the 42d regiment, who, as well as Captain Collins, periſhed in that exploſion.

An action which a detachment from the garriſon of Ninety Six had with an American corps, upon the 19th of Auguſt, 1780, would certainly have excited the attention of a correct hiſtorian.

Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's forte as an author, ſeems to be compilation; he might therefore have given the American account of this affair, either from Ramſey, or from the Scots Magazine of December, 1780; but as it has entirely eſcaped his attention, you may depend upon the following ſtatement, as it comes from unqueſtionable authority.

The Americans, under Colonels Williams, Shelby, and Clarke, were ſtrongly poſted on the Weſtern banks of the Enoree; their numbers have not been preciſely aſcertained, probably five hundred. The detachment of Britiſh troops, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Innes, conſiſted of a light infantry company of the New-Jerſey volunteers, a captain's command of Delancy's, and about one hundred men of the South Carolina regiment mounted. The troops paſſed the river, the infantry drove the enemy at the point of the bayonet, and the horſe, though but lately raiſed, and indifferently diſciplined, behaved with great gallantry; but in the moment of victory, the commandant, Major Fraſer, Captain Campbell, Lieutenants Chew and Camp, five out of the ſeven officers preſent, were wounded by a volley from the Americans. The Britiſh troops, conſequently unable to avail themſelves of the advantages which now offered, were conducted by Captain Kerr to the Eaſtern

ſide

ſide of the river, where they remained till reinforced by Lieutenant Colonel Cruger.

In our author's deſcription of the action at Hanging Rock, the partiality which he entertains for his own corps is evident; the gallantry of officers, and of a detachment with which he was not immediately connected, is conſigned to oblivion. This aſſertion is juſtified by his ſilence on the loſs of Lieutenant Brown of the North Carolinians, who fell in a deſperate charge, which the criſis of the action rendered inevitable; and beſides him, not leſs than ſeventy men of the ſame regiment were killed and wounded, of which, however, no mention is made, as it would appear a participation of the credit aſcribed to the legion.

From too great attention to his own exploits, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton pays not that decent regard to thoſe of others, which hiſtorical truth indiſpenſ-

ably

ably requires. He has not recorded the fall of ſeveral officers at the ſiege of Auguſta; and the whole of thoſe who diſplayed ſuch diſtinguiſhed bravery in the defence of Ninety Six, are, without exception, paſſed over in ſilence. Of the former of theſe ſieges, he appears to know little indeed; and of the latter, though one of the moſt brilliant affairs which occurred during the war, he ſeems to the full as ignorant, as he poſſibly may be of thoſe of Candia or Rhodes.

Excluſive of thoſe already mentioned, the death of Captains Kelly and Hewlet, the wounds of Captains Niſbet and Robinſon, of Lieutenants Toriano, Cowel, Mackay, Robinſon, and others, certainly merited attention; and his neglect, in not particulariſing the officers who were ſacrificed immediately under his own eye at Cowpens, is ſtill more unpardonable.

In page 505, he aſſerts, "Two officers, "with forty dragoons and their horſes, "were

"were all taken without a blow;" but the fact is, that Lieutenant Sutherland of the South Carolina dragoons, one of the officers thus cenſured, being on a foraging party, fell in with a conſiderable corps of the enemy's cavalry, and defended himſelf, when attacked, with a degree of valour, bordering on exceſs; he was ſo deſperately wounded in this rencounter, that the infantry, who had now advanced to his ſupport, left him on the field for dead. This gentleman, however, ſtill lives, though his recovery is held by the medical faculty, as an event next to a prodigy. So far was he from not exchanging blows with the ſuperior force by which he was attacked, that a conſiderable portion of his ſcull was found to have been cut out with a ſabre, the manifeſt proof of which is diſplayed by the perception of the movements of the brain, upon an application of the hand: he is now in Nova Scotia, and our author probably conceived that he might hazard ſuch a reflection upon his conduct,

duct, as he has made upon that of other abſent officers, without the riſque of contradiction.

To the names already ſpecified, thoſe of many American Loyaliſts might have been added; men, whoſe integrity was incorruptible, undiſmayed in the hour of danger, who ſacrificed their private intereſt to publick good, and who, though they knew that the internal peace of their families was deſtroyed, by the ravages of relentleſs war, fought and bled with manly ſpirit; maintained their allegiance to their lateſt moments, and evinced a probity of mind under every reverſe of fortune, which muſt endear them to poſterity. Such names, a gentleman who undertook to write an Hiſtory of the Southern Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, ſhould have known, and ſuch merit he ought to have recorded. But let us follow our author to his own atchievements, where no charge of omiſſion can poſſibly be brought againſt him.

Page 17, "with five *horſes* killed and "wounded." Page 20, "The Britiſh "dragoons loſt two men and four *horſes* "in the action, but returning to Lord "Cornwallis's camp the ſame evening, "upwards of twenty *horſes expired* with "fatigue." Page 30, "And thirty-one "*horſes* killed and wounded." Page 115, "And twenty *horſes* were killed and "wounded." Page 180, "With thirty "*horſes* killed and wounded." Page 226, "And twenty *horſes* fell." Page 287, "Three men wounded, and a few *horſes* "killed and wounded."

From ſuch anxiety in our author not to omit recording the ſmalleſt loſs ſuſtained by his own corps, this reflection naturally occurs, that the fall of HORSES, in actions wherein he was concerned, is entitled to a preferable attention in his work, to OFFICERS of equal, perhaps ſuperior, merit to himſelf, who ſuffered upon other occaſions!!!

You will keep this trait continually in view, as we follow him through his campaigns; it is a diſtinguiſhing one, and will enable you to form a proper judgment of matters which would otherwiſe appear inexplicable.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN ſupport of the maxim contained in the cloſe of my laſt letter, I proceed to ſhew, that, through this performance, the author, in general, either appears as his own panegyriſt and hero of his tale, or as the detractor and cenſor of the conduct of others; his mole-hills are raiſed into mountains, while the moſt ſplendid actions of thoſe who came neareſt to the ſummit of perfection, are either depreciated by avowed cenſure, oblique inſinuation, or entirely paſſed

paſſed over in ſilence. Even a Lord Rawdon eſcapes not the acrimony of his pen! Accordingly, in his relation of circumſtances which occurred during this nobleman's encampment at Lynch's Creek, he obſerves, page 99, "The hoſpital, the baggage, the proviſions, the ammunition, and the ſtores, remained under a weak guard at Camden. General Gates advanced to the Creek oppoſite to the Britiſh camp, and ſkirmiſhes enſued between the advanced parties of the two armies. The American commander diſcovered that Lord Rawdon's poſition was ſtrong, and he declined an attack; but he had not ſufficient penetration to conceive, that by a forced march up the Creek he could have paſſed Lord Rawdon's flank, and reached Camden, which would have been an *eaſy* conqueſt, and a fatal blow to the Britiſh." And page 109, "The firſt miſconception imputable to General Gates, was the not breaking in upon the Britiſh communications as

"ſoon as he arrived near Lynch's Creek. "The move up the Creek, and from "thence to Camden, was *practicable* and "*eaſy* before the King's troops were con- "centered at that place; or he might, "*without the ſmalleſt difficulty*, have occu- "pied a ſtrong poſition on Saunders's "Creek, five miles from Camden, be- "fore Earl Cornwallis joined the Royal "forces."

The moſt ſtrongly marked features in the military character of Lord Rawdon, are, a ſingular talent for enterprize, an acute diſcernment, and unremitting vigilance. The army under his command lay for ſeveral days within one mile of General Gates's encampment, and directly between him and Camden, the protection of which place, was the great and immediate object of his Lordſhip's attention, and to accompliſh which, he ſhewed no diſinclination to come to an action. Thus ſituated, and ſo determined, it is ridiculous to ſuppoſe that he would have

ſuffered

ſuffered the American army to paſs on either flank, or by any means to poſſeſs themſelves of Camden, which was then the only depot of the Britiſh army in that part of the country. The inconſiſtency of theſe inſinuations have been expoſed, even by gentlemen, who, though unacquainted with local ſituations, juſtly conclude, "That it muſt ſuppoſe a ſu-"pineneſs in Lord Rawdon, by no means "conſiſtent with his abilities and military "talents*." But to put the matter beyond a doubt, here, as uſual, our author furniſhes a decided argument in contradiction to his own aſſertions. Page 101, he tells us, "A patrole, ſent by General "Gates to Rugely's Mills on the 12th, "occaſioned a report that the American "commander was moving to his right. "The ſituation of the Britiſh hoſpital "and magazine, and the preſent diſtance "of the army, pointed out to Lord Raw-"don the propriety of falling back from

* Critical Review, May, 1787.

"Lynch's Creek, and of concentrating "his force near Camden. The move "was accordingly made." If then, as the author himſelf acknowledges, even a patrole of the enemy failed not to excite the attention of Lord Rawdon, was it to be ſuppoſed that the movement of a whole army would eſcape his vigilance and circumſpection?

Our author, in arraigning the penetration of General Gates, is rather unfortunate; his animadverſions unluckily falling upon an officer who had, before that, proved to all mankind, that he neither wanted inclination nor ability to be a principal inſtrument of the ruin of the Britiſh intereſt in America*. From his known character there is not left a ſhadow of doubt, that if the meaſures

* General Gates had attained the rank of Major in the Britiſh ſervice. Upon the commencement of the American war, he took an active part in the affairs of that country, and was the officer who captured an army at Saratoga.

ſuggeſted

ſuggeſted by this author had been the moſt proper, they would not have been neglected.

While one ſlender thread runs through the whole labyrinth of this incoherent performance, influencing its author in every aſſertion, and while he never quits the idea of raiſing himſelf, and ſinking the other officers of the Britiſh army in the eſtimation of his readers; to render this ſcheme more complete, he extends his animadverſions to the commanders of the enemy, attributing to their miſconduct the moſt brilliant atchievements of the beſt Britiſh officers, and imputing to want of ability in the latter, every misfortune which befel them. But the whole execution is accompanied with ſuch a wavering inconſiſtency, and diſplays ſuch a feebleneſs of judgment throughout, as to juſtify the application to his caſe of the words of a celebrated poet:

— "He now to ſenſe, now nonſenſe leaning,
"Means not, but blunders round about a meaning."

And he has left us to lament, with Ganganelli, that there are ſome authors, who in their attempts to riſe into the uncommon, have fallen into the abſurd.

The following paſſages are ſelected to ſhew the ſelf-importance which pervades this work. Page 7, "Lieutenant Co-"lonel Tarleton *requeſted* the uſe of ſome "of the Quarter Maſter General's boats." Page 27, "Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, "on this occaſion, was *deſired* to conſult "his own judgment." Page 100, "Lieu-"tenant Colonel Tarleton, being reco-"vered from a fever, was *deſired* to collect "all the dragoons he could find in "Charleſtown." Page 103, "Upon *ap-*"*plication* from Lieutenant Colonel Tarle-"ton, he (Earl Cornwallis) ordered all "the horſes of the army, belonging both "to regiments and departments, to be "aſſembled: the beſt were ſelected for

"the

"the ſervice of the cavalry, and, upon the "*proprietors receiving payment*, they were "delivered up to the Britiſh legion. "Theſe active preparations diffuſed ani- "mation and vigour throughout the "army. On the 15th, the principal part "of the King's troops had orders to be "in readineſs to march: in the afternoon "Earl Cornwallis *deſired* Lieutenant Co- "lonel Tarleton, &c."

Such effuſions of vanity as theſe have a very diſguſting effect. To other officers, from a General of ſuch high birth and length of ſervice, it was ſufficient to be *commanded*, but this gentleman muſt be *deſired* and *requeſted* to do what was merely his duty.

It is well known that the publick ſervice required Earl Cornwallis to mount dragoons by the expedient juſt mentioned; and, that the Britiſh government is too juſt to deprive its ſubjects of private property without an equivalent, I readily

admit, but that the proprietors have received payment for these horses, is denied. A number of officers, now in this kingdom, are in possession of receipts passed on this occasion by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, which remain to this hour undischarged; many of these gentlemen are reduced to the scanty pittance of half-pay, and it would afford them much satisfaction to know through what channel they are to make application for payment.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

MY DEAR SIR,

I NEXT call your attention to ſome circumſtances previous to the fall of Ferguſon. Our author inſinuates that Earl Cornwallis might have foreſeen and guarded againſt this misfortune. The charge is more than diſingenuous, and merits a pointed refutation. In purſuing the inveſtigation, the ſtrength and movements of the army, the ſituation of the partiſan, the extraordinary exertions of an enemy, from a quarter totally unexpected,

expected, and the principles upon which our author reaſons, muſt all be conſidered.

The Britiſh General commenced his firſt invaſion of North Carolina about the 20th of September, 1780, having previouſly determined to march through the Waxhaws, and to make Charlotte-town a place of arms. This meaſure has been indecently arraigned, but the arguments adduced in ſupport of the accuſation, are evidently ill-founded: they ſhall be examined in their proper place. It will appear, by quotations from his work, that the author has exaggerated the force of Earl Cornwallis. He miſſtates the movements of troops, and, by a natural conſequence, has drawn falſe inferences from erroneous principles. He ſays, page 158, "Earl Cornwallis, with "the principal column of the army, "compoſed of the 7th, 23d, 33d, and "71ſt regiments of infantry, the volun-"teers of Ireland, *Hamilton's Corps*, Bry-

"an's

" an's Refugees, four pieces of cannon, " about fifty waggons, and a detachment " of cavalry, marched by Hanging Rock, " towards the Catawba ſettlement; whilſt " the body of the Britiſh dragoons, and the " light and legion infantry, with a three " pounder, croſſed the Wateree, and " moved up the *Eaſt* ſide of the river, " under Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton. " The ſcarcity of forage in the diſtrict " of Waxhaws was the *principal* reaſon " for this temporary ſeparation." The army which his Lordſhip commanded upon this occaſion did not exceed fifteen hundred regulars, and, probably, about half that number of attendant militia. Colonel John Hamilton, a gentleman of independent fortune from North Carolina, who had in the riſe of the late momentous controverſy attached himſelf to the Britiſh intereſt, had now more than completed his battalion, originally intended to conſiſt of five hundred men. However deſirous Lord Cornwallis might be to avail himſelf of the aſſiſtance of

Colonel

Colonel Hamilton at this juncture, the preſent ſituation of affairs in South Carolina required his preſence at Camden, he was therefore left with his regiment to garriſon that poſt, nor did a ſingle ſoldier belonging to it appear in his Lordſhip's camp, from his departure in September, until after his return from Charlottetown, and the taking poſt at Wynneſborough in November following; nay, the General was ſo fully convinced of their being required at the ſtation they were left to defend, that, on the delivery of a quantity of ſtores, eſcorted by them to the army, their *immediate* return was ordered. Thus an increaſe of more than five hundred regulars is made to his Lordſhip's force.

The ſecond part of this quotation, which extends to a movement of the corps under the command of our author, is not leſs erroneous, and the mis-ſtatement is heightened by circumſtances peculiarly aggravating. He ſays, page 168, "A move-

"A movement on the *Weſt* of the Ca-
"tawba, towards Tryon county, would
"have been better calculated either to
"cover the frontier of South Carolina,
"or to protect detachments from the
"army." The author muſt ſurely have drank deep of Lethe's waters to have ſo ſoon forgotten his own route on this occaſion, nay, a reference to his map would have convinced him of his miſtake. The only body of troops detached at this time, was that under the command of Colonel Ferguſon. To ſupport this diviſion, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, with about ſeven hundred men, upwards of three hundred of which were cavalry, croſſed the Wateree a few miles above Camden, and advanced upon the *Weſt* ſide of that river, immediately between the Royal army and Ferguſon's corps. The aſſertion, therefore, that "He moved "up the *Eaſt* ſide of the river," is a miſ-ſtatement of the fact, and calculated to produce concluſions remote from the truth.

The

The laſt part of this quotation is next to be conſidered: "The ſcarcity of forage "in the diſtrict of the Waxhaws, was "the *principal* reaſon for this temporary "ſeparation." As Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton ſeems reſolved not to admit that the movement of his own corps could have the effect here pointed out, he ſhould have aſſigned a weightier reaſon for ſuch a ſeparation. In fact, he is no leſs unfortunate in this, than in the two former aſſertions in the quotation before us. Far from being reduced to a ſcanty pittance of forage in the diſtrict of Waxhaws, after the army had remained there ſome weeks, a quantity might have been collected within five miles of their encampment, ſufficient to ſupply their wants for ſeveral months. This reaſoning is drawn from obſervations formed upon the ſpot, and though I am unable to produce official vouchers in juſtification, the proof may be ſafely reſted with the officers who ſerved in that army, and who were eye-witneſſes

of

of the extenſive reſources of the country.

Whenever I open this work, I either find an unexceptionable character attacked, a reſpectable one indirectly aſperſed, or a diſplay of atchievements by the author, or his corps, of which I had no idea previous to its publication. Thus, on taking poſſeſſion of Charlottetown, he ſays, page 159, "An ambuſcade was "apprehended by the light troops, who "moved forward for ſome time with "great circumſpection: a charge of ca-"valry, under Major Hanger, diſſipated "this ill-grounded jealouſy, and totally "diſperſed the militia."

That a charge was ordered is readily admitted; that the Major was wounded in attempting to lead the dragoons to this charge, is well known; but no entreaties of his, no exertions of their officers, could, upon this occaſion, induce the legion cavalry to approach the American

militia. They retreated without fulfilling the intention of the General. He therefore, much diſſatisfied, ordered the light and legion infantry to diſlodge the enemy, which they immediately effected.

It is worthy of obſervation, that this journaliſt ſhould ſo ſingularly miſrepreſent a variety of plain facts, and at the ſame time overlook, or pretend ignorance of others, that were obvious to the whole army.

He ſays, page 167, "The King's troops "left Charlottetown on the evening of "the 14th, to march to the Catawba "Ford: owing to the badneſs of the "road, the ignorance of the guides, the "darkneſs of the night, or ſome other "*unknown* cauſe, the Britiſh rear guard "deſtroyed, or left behind, near twenty "waggons."

It is totally immaterial to the preſent purpoſe, whether our author's unacquaintance

quaintance with this loſs was real or pretended. The cauſe, however, was known by every individual in that army. The guide at this time employed was a Doctor M———, a Preſbyterian fanatick from Glaſgow, the ambiguity of whoſe faith did not eſcape the diſcernment of the General. Under this diſtruſt he was given in charge to a corporal and two dragoons of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's corps. The Doctor was too ſhrewd for his guards, and finding that they had no ſuſpicion of his real deſign, he led the army, in a dark and rainy night, through thick woods, briars, deep ravines, marſhes, and creeks ſcarcely fordable. After ſuch a progreſs of ſix hours, the General grew impatient, the alarmed guide eluded the vigilance of the dragoons, and eſcaped unobſerved. Left in ſuch a ſituation, any army, where not one of the individuals which compoſed it knew where they were, might be well contented to come off with a loſs ſo trifling as that of a few waggons.

As the author is ſo diffuſe in his cenſures of the conduct of Earl Cornwallis, the farther conſideration of this ſhall be the ſubject of my next.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE object of my laſt letter was to point out ſome erroneous ſtatements of the meaſures adopted by Earl Cornwallis for the conqueſt of North Carolina. The arguments of our author on that head require farther conſideration. He ſays, page 168, "It was "now evident, beyond contradiction, "that the Britiſh General had not adopt-"ed the moſt eligible plan for the inva-"ſion of North Carolina. The route "by Charlottetown, through the moſt

"hoſtile quarter of the province, on
"many accounts, was not adviſable. Its
"diſtance likewiſe from Ferguſon allowed
"the enemy to direct their attention and
"force againſt that officer, which ulti-
"mately proved his deſtruction. A
"movement on the Weſt ſide of the Ca-
"tawba, towards Tryon county, would
"have been better calculated either to
"cover the frontier of South Carolina,
"or to protect detachments from the
"army. Another operation might alſo
"have been attempted, which, in all
"probability, would have had a benefi-
"cial effect. Conſidering the force of
"the King's troops at this period, a
"march to Croſs-Creek would have been
"the moſt rational manœuvre that could
"have been adopted."

This is a novel ſpecies of reaſoning. To ſtrike at the principal force of the enemy, is undoubtedly the quickeſt, and moſt certain method of enſuring ſucceſs. While the Britiſh General poſſeſſed Char-

lottetown, he overawed the ſurrounding diſtricts; his route thither through the Waxhaws was judiciouſly choſen; that powerful and inveterate ſettlement was ſoon cruſhed, and his advance through the heart of the provinces afforded him an opportunity of attending to the extremities, as it was equally calculated to protect the frontiers of South Carolina, and the Loyaliſts at Croſs-Creek.

In Polk's Mill alone, twenty-five thouſand pounds weight of flour was captured; additional ſupplies could alſo have been procured from the Waxhaws, from the mills in the neighbourhood, and the adjacent plantations in great abundance. The author is condeſcending enough to admit, pages 159 and 160, that "Char-"lottetown afforded *ſome* conveniencies, "blended with great diſadvantages. The "mills in its neighbourhood were *ſuppoſed* "of ſufficient conſequence to render it, "for the preſent, an eligible poſition, "and, in future, a neceſſary poſt when

"the army advanced: but (he farther "ſays) the aptneſs of its intermediate "ſituation between Camden and Saliſ- "bury, and the quantity of its mills, "did not counterbalance its defects. "The town and environs abound- "ed with inveterate enemies; the plan- "tations in the neighbourhood were "ſmall and uncultivated; the roads nar- "row, and croſſed in every direction; "and the whole face of the country co- "vered with cloſe and thick woods."

Many of the above remarks are inadmiſſible. No diſaſtrous event, inferior to that which befel Ferguſon, could poſſibly have given effect to the exertions of the inhabitants inimical to the Britiſh government around Charlottetown; their whole force, though directed againſt a detachment conſiſting of thirty men, under the command of Lieutenant Guyon of the 23d regiment, was repulſed with diſgrace. The roads in every direction from that place to Camden, to Saliſbury,

to

to Tryon county, are perfectly good, and ſurpaſſed by none on the continent of America. The ſoil is fertile and productive, and few countries, ſo far from the ſea-coaſt, are better cultivated and cleared of timber.

My ideas of the geography of the country preſent concluſions diametrically oppoſite to thoſe of our author. I am at a loſs to comprehend his meaning, when he ſays, that a march towards Tryon county would have been better calculated to protect detachments from the army, and, nearly in the ſame inſtant, points out a move to Croſs-Creek to be the moſt rational manœuvre that could have been adopted. If, on the one hand, he would convey this ſenſe, that the army ſhould have been divided, and employed on two different expeditions, the anſwer is obvious, that their force was by no means adequate to ſo hazardous an undertaking. Should he, on the other, contend, that a movement either to Tryon county, or

to Croſs-Creek, would have produced the ſame effect, I aver, that theſe directions differ nearly as far as Eaſt does from Weſt; conſequently if Croſs-Creek became the object of attention, the Weſtern frontier would have been expoſed, and if the army advanced by Tryon county, the Loyaliſts at Croſs-Creek muſt have been ſacrificed. If the reaſoning of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton can be allowed, the greateſt contradictions in military operations may be reconciled, and ſoleciſm may be an exploded term in our language. In fact, officers leſs honoured with the confidence of Earl Cornwallis than our author, well knew that his Lordſhip intended to approach Croſs-Creek after being joined by Ferguſon, and after eſtabliſhing a poſt at Charlottetown. Indeed, this will appear by a letter, which our journaliſt has taken from the Remembrancer. Earl Cornwallis to Colonel Ferguſon: "As ſoon as I have conſumed "the proviſions in this ſettlement, I ſhall "march

"march with as much expedition as poſ-
"ſible to Croſs-Creek."*

As ſeveral very extraordinary circumſtances, and ſuch as no human foreſight could guard againſt, contributed to Ferguſon's melancholy cataſtrophe, it will be requiſite to ſubmit them to your inſpection. They could ſcarcely be unknown to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, but as they would have militated againſt his arguments, had they been candidly ſtated, they were artfully ſuppreſſed, as their developement would have materially affected the reputation of his peformance.

Ferguſon had directions to advance on the left flank of the main army. His force conſiſted of about one hundred and fifty men from the provincial corps, in whom perfect confidence might on all occaſions be placed, and from one to two thouſand militia, a fluctuating body,

* Vide page 192.

whoſe

whoſe numbers could not be depended upon, as they increaſed, or diminiſhed, with the report of the day. With theſe he proceeded when the army began its march. At this juncture, direct intelligence of the defeat of Clarke before Auguſta, and of his retreat to North Carolina, through the back country, was conveyed to the unfortunate Ferguſon. A ſpirit of enterprize with which few are gifted, a zeal peculiar to great minds, an affection for his prince, and a pure ſenſe of true patriotiſm, probably impelled him to exceed the ſtrict injunctions impoſed on him by the General on the preſent occaſion. He determined to ſtrike at Clarke, and with this intention advanced towards Tryon county. A ſwarm of backwoods-men, who had originally different objects in view, were eaſily prevailed upon to unite their force. The wild and fierce inhabitants of Kentucky, and other ſettlements weſtward of the Allegany mountains, under the Colonels Campbell and Boone, and thoſe of Holſton,

ſton, Powel's Valley, Berkley, Bottetourt, Auguſta and Fincaſtle, under the Colonels Cleveland, Shelby, Sevier, Williams, Brandon and Lacey, aſſembled ſuddenly and ſilently. Each man was well mounted, and furniſhed with a rifle and ſome proviſions: no incumbrance of waggons, no publick departments, impeded the movements of theſe hardy mountaineers. The diviſion from beyond the mountains advanced, with intention to ſeize upon a quantity of preſents which they underſtood were but ſlightly guarded at Auguſta, and which were, about that time, to have been diſtributed among a body of Creek and Cherokee Indians aſſembled at that place: the other diviſion intended, at leaſt, to obſtruct the advance of the Britiſh army towards their ſettlements. The rough reception which Clarke had met with from Colonel Brown, induced him to magnify the force at Auguſta in ſuch lively colours, as totally to ſtop any proceedings againſt that poſt; and a ſuppoſed ſuperiority cauſed them to decline direct

direct opposition to Earl Cornwallis. They therefore selected fifteen hundred picked men, and having mounted these on fleet horses, they by rapid marches soon came up with the gallant Ferguson. Having thus accounted for the unexpected combination of force by which he was destroyed, I shall reserve his conduct in the action at King's Mountain for another letter.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE forte of the unfortunate Major Ferguſon was not retreat but perſeverance. He halted upon King's Mountain, an advantageous ground, to receive his enemy; but as the laſt act of this gallant partiſan has been ſo ſlightly paſſed over by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, we muſt have recourſe to an American author, who has diſcovered no partiality for Britiſh characters, for a ſtriking portrait of the intrepidity of that diſtinguiſhed officer.

Ramſey,

Ramſey, in deſcribing this action, obſerves, Vol. II. pages 183 and 184, "The "picquet ſoon gave way, and were purſued as they retired up the mountain "to the main body. Colonel Ferguſon, "with the greateſt bravery, ordered his "men to charge. The Americans, commanded by Colonel Cleveland, followed "his advice, and, having fired as long as "they could with ſafety, they retired "from the approaching bayonet. They "had ſcarcely given way when the other "detachment, commanded by Colonel "Shelby, having completed the circuit of "the mountain, opportunely arrived, and "from an unexpected quarter poured in "a well directed fire. Colonel Ferguſon "deſiſted from the purſuit, and engaged "with his new adverſaries. The Britiſh "bayonet was again ſucceſsful, and cauſed "them alſo to fall back. By this time "the party commanded by Colonel "Campbell had aſcended the mountain, "and renewed the attack from that emi-"nence. Colonel Ferguſon, whoſe con-

"duct

"duct was equal to his courage, preſented
"a new front, and was again ſucceſsful;
"but all his exertions were unavailing.
"At this moment the men who began
"the attack, no leſs obedient to the ſe-
"cond requeſt of their commander in re-
"turning to their poſts, than they were
"to the firſt in ſecuring themſelves by a
"timely retreat, had rallied and renewed
"their fire. As often as one of the
"American parties was driven back, ano-
"ther returned to their ſtation. Reſiſt-
"ance on the part of Colonel Ferguſon
"was in vain; but his unconquerable ſpi-
"rit refuſed to ſurrender. After having
"repulſed a ſucceſſion of adverſaries
"pouring in their fire from new direc-
"tions, this diſtinguiſhed officer received
"a mortal wound."

Thus fell Major Patrick Ferguſon, a gentleman whoſe virtues and accompliſhments were univerſally admired. In the commencement of the war, he lamented the deſtruction cauſed in the Britiſh army by

by the American markſmen, and exerted his genius in conſtructing a rifle, which loaded with greater celerity, and fired with ſuperior exactitude to thoſe in uſe with the enemy, thus counteracting them at their own weapons. While belonging to a regiment which occupied the peaceful garriſon of Halifax in Nova-Scotia, he diſdained inglorious eaſe, embarked for England, ſolicited and obtained the command of a corps which was entirely equipped upon his own principles. By his vigilance and activity in Pennſylvania and New Jerſey, he acquired the confidence of the Commander in Chief, and improved it by ſubſequent ſervices at Stony Point, and in ſeveral deſultory deſcents upon the enemies coaſt. All theſe had the effect of equally diſtreſſing the Americans, and raiſing their ideas of Britiſh valour.

In the year 1780 he was appointed to a command formed of detachments ſelected from the Provincial corps, and

embarked

embarked on the expedition which reduced Charleſtown. His talent for enterpriſe attracted the notice of the whole army: military tacticks had been his early and favourite ſtudy; and his knowledge was drawn from the pureſt ſources. To a diſtinguiſhed capacity for planning the greateſt deſigns, he added the ardour neceſſary to carry them into execution. He was therefore charged with the meaſure of ſupporting, and at the ſame time diſciplining, the numerous bodies of Loyaliſts with which the interior diſtricts of the Carolinas abounded; and it was in the proſecution of this truſt that he met his fate upon King's Mountain, in the manner before related. In private life, his humanity and benevolence were conſpicuous; his friendſhips were ſteady and ſincere. In his profeſſional capacity he thirſted after fame, and periſhed in its purſuit. Conſidered as a ſcholar, his genius was ſolid, his comprehenſion clear, and his erudition extenſive. The ſerene fortitude which he evinced in his

lateſt moments, ſtrongly pourtrayed his military virtues.

In the account which Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton has given to the world of this action, he brings a charge, equally unjuſt and cruel, againſt Captain Depeiſter of the King's American regiment, upon whom the command devolved after the death of Colonel Ferguſon. The charge is unjuſt, becauſe it is without foundation; and cruel, becauſe it ſtrikes at the reputation of an officer now in Nova Scotia, and conſequently incapable of confronting the accuſer or the accuſation. He ſays, page 165, "No effort "was made after this event (the death "of Ferguſon) to reſiſt the enemy's bar-"barity, or revenge the fall of their "leader."

A periodical publication had conveyed a ſimilar reflection upon Captain Depeiſter, while a priſoner to the Americans. Captain Taylor of the New Jerſey Volunteers,

lunteers, and Lieutenant Allair of the Loyal American regiment, the only officers of Ferguſon's detachment then in Charleſtown, made affidavit, that the conduct of Captain Depeiſter, in the action in queſtion, both before and after the death of Ferguſon, was, in their opinion, in every reſpect proper, and ſuch as either of them would have purſued, had they been ſimilarly circumſtanced. This affidavit was publiſhed in the Charleſtown Gazette, and Ramſey confirms it, thus: "No chance of "eſcape being left, and all proſpect of "ſucceſsful reſiſtance being at an end, "the ſecond in command ſued for quar-"ter."

I have now given you the opinions of two Britiſh officers who were in the action, corroborated by the relation of the American hiſtorian, and leave you to judge whether it would not have been more generous and candid in Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton to have governed his

account by teſtimony ſo unequivocal, than to have followed the unfounded aſperſions of an anonymous writer.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SIR,

MUCH has been ſaid, by different authors, on the partiality with which actions, by detachments from the Britiſh army in the Carolinas, have been reported, and by no leſs than official authority; the cauſes, however, which they have aſſigned for ſuch miſrepreſentations, are equally, as themſelves, remote from the truth; the general idea by which they were miſled, is, that Earl Cornwallis was induced to make favour-

able reports, with the direct deſign of keeping up the ſpirits of the militia abroad, and giving vigour to the exertions of adminiſtration. While then it is granted, that much exultation has been diſplayed in celebrating victories which had no exiſtence, it ſtill remains certain, that the occaſion of it was not deſign in the General, but the falſe colouring of the accounts which he received. Let us inquire how well this obſervation is founded.

With all due reſpect for the character of Earl Cornwallis, as being much above any ſuſpicion of wilful intention to miſlead, I muſt, however, take the liberty to ſay, that his Lordſhip's teſtimony, in the preſent caſe, is entirely out of the queſtion. The General detaches Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton on an expedition a conſiderable diſtance from the army, and receives a report from him of a victory. Upon this report, he founds his official diſpatches, and our author is for ſome time

time hailed as victor, from Wynneſborough to Camden, from Camden to Charleſtown, from Charleſtown to New-York, and from thence to London. At Liverpool, bonfires are lighted up in honour of their favourite hero. After ſeveral years have elapſed, he ſtill preſents the world with his claim to victory. He goes farther, and with a truly curious addreſs holds forth the diſpatches of Earl Cornwallis, though entirely founded on his own reports, as vouchers for the veracity of his aſſertions.

With ſome men of inventive genius, the ſallies of imagination are ſo exuberant, as only to require frequent repetition to obtrude them on the mind for truths. We proceed to an examination of our author's account of the action at Blackſtocks, on the 20th of November, 1780.

Pages 178 and 179, "The great road "to the ford acroſs the river paſſed

"through the center of the Americans,
"and close to the doors of houses where
"the main body were stationed. The
"whole position was visible, owing to
"the elevation of the ground, and this
"formidable appearance made Tarleton
"halt upon the opposite height, where
"he intended to remain quiet till his in-
"fantry and three-pounder arrived: to
"encourage the enemy to do the same,
"he dismounted the 63d to take post,
"and part of the cavalry to ease their
"horses. Sumpter observing this opera-
"tion, ordered a body of four hundred
"Americans to advance, and attack the
"63d in front, whilst another party ap-
"proached the dragoons in flank. A
"heavy fire and sharp conflict ensued;
"the 63d charged with fixed bayonets,
"and drove the enemy back; and a
"troop of cavalry, under Lieutenant
"Skinner, bravely repulsed the detach-
"ment which threatened the flank. The
"ardour of the 63d carried them too
"far, and exposed them to a considerable

"fire

"fire from the buildings and the moun-
"tain. Though the undertaking ap-
"peared hazardous, Lieutenant Colonel
"Tarleton determined to charge the
"enemy's center with a column of dra-
"goons, in order to cover the 63d,
"whoſe ſituation was now become dan-
"gerous. The attack was conducted
"with great celerity, and was attended
"with immediate ſucceſs. The cavalry
"ſoon reached the houſes, and broke
"the Americans, who from that inſtant
"began to diſperſe: the 63d immediately
"rallied, and darkneſs put an end to the
"engagement. A purſuit acroſs a river,
"with a few troops of cavalry, and a
"ſmall body of infantry, was not adviſ-
"able in the night; a poſition was there-
"fore taken adjoining to the field of bat-
"tle, to wait the arrival of the light and
"legion-infantry.

"An expreſs was ſent to acquaint Earl
"Cornwallis with the *ſucceſs* of his
"troops." He farther obſerves, that

"Three

"Three of the enemy's Colonels fell in "the action."

Ramſey deſcribes this affair in the following manner, Volume II. page 189: "On the 20th of the ſame month, Ge- "neral Sumpter was attacked at Black- "ſtocks, near Tyger river, by Lieutenant "Colonel Tarleton, at the head of a "conſiderable party. The action was "ſevere and obſtinate. The killed and "wounded of the Britiſh was conſidera- "ble. Among the former were three "officers, Major Money, Lieutenants "Gibſon and Cope. The Americans "loſt very few, but General Sumpter re- "ceived a wound, which for ſeveral "months interrupted his gallant enter- "priſes in behalf of the ſtate." And again, in recording the ſenſe which Congreſs had of this action, we find, page 469, thanks given by them to Sumpter and his party in the general orders of their Southern American army, for "The re- "pulſe of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton,

"and

"and the Britiſh cavalry and infantry "under his command, at Blackſtocks, on "Tyger river."

To the two diſtinct accounts now laid before you, I ſhall ſubjoin a third, which you will undoubtedly deem preferable to either, as it is collected from the concurrent teſtimony of ſeveral officers of veracity, who were actors in that engagement.

Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, without waiting for the reſt of his detachment, made a precipitate attack with one hundred and ſeventy dragoons, and eighty men of the 63d regiment, upon the enemy, under the command of General Sumpter, ſtrongly poſted on Blackſtock Hill, and amounting to about five hundred. That part of the hill, to which the attack was directed, was nearly perpendicular, with a ſmall rivulet, bruſh wood, and a railed fence in front. Their rear, and part of their right flank were ſecured by

by the river Tyger, and their left was covered by a large log barn, into which a conſiderable diviſion of their force had been thrown, and from which, as the apertures between the logs ſerved them for loop holes, they fired with ſecurity. Britiſh valour was conſpicuous in this action; but no valour could ſurmount the obſtacles and diſadvantages that here ſtood in its way. The 63d was roughly handled; the commanding officer, two others, with one-third of their privates, fell. Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, obſerving their ſituation, charged with his cavalry; unable to diſlodge the enemy, either from the log barn or the height upon his left, he was obliged to fall back. Lieutenant Skinner, attached to the cavalry, with a preſence of mind ever uſeful in ſuch emergencies, covered the retreat of the 63d. In this manner did the whole party continue to retire, till they formed a junction with their infantry, who were advancing to ſuſtain them, leaving Sumpter in quiet poſſeſſion of the

field. This officer occupied the hill for ſeveral hours, but having received a bad wound, and knowing that the Britiſh would be reinforced before next morning, he thought it hazardous to wait. He accordingly retired, and taking his wounded men with him, croſſed the rapid river Tyger, while the victorious Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton retreated ſome diſtance, Parthian like, conquering as he flew. The wounded of the Britiſh detachment were left to the mercy of the enemy, and it is but doing bare juſtice to General Sumpter, to declare, that the ſtricteſt humanity took place upon the preſent occaſion; they were ſupplied with every comfort in his power.

You have been previouſly apprized, that the American hiſtorian, laudably, takes every opportunity to celebrate the actions, and record the death of thoſe of his countrymen who fell in battle. He has, indeed, mentioned the wounds of General Sumpter, but is ſilent on the fall of

of the three Colonels deſcribed by our author. The real truth is, that the Americans being well ſheltered, ſuſtained very inconſiderable loſs in the attack; and as for the three Colonels, they muſt certainly have been imaginary beings, "men "in buckram," created merely to grace the triumph of a victory, which the Britiſh army in Carolina were led to celebrate, amidſt the contempt and deriſion of the inhabitants, who had much better information.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR SIR,

I NOW proceed to examine the account which our author has given to the world of his defeat at Cowpens, but previous to this inveſtigation it will be neceſſary to inquire, what degree of credit is due to his deſcription of the advance to the field of battle. The traits of ſelf-importance which it contains are too apparent to eſcape the notice of any reader; in his relation of circumſtances antecedent to this diſaſter, he

he ſays, pages 211, and 212, that in a letter to Earl Cornwallis, "*He repreſented* "the courſe to be taken, which *fortu-* "*nately* correſponded with the ſcheme of "the campaign: *he mentioned* the mode of "proceeding to be employed againſt Ge- "neral Morgan: *he propoſed* the ſame "time, for the army and light troops to "commence their march: *he explained* the "point to be attained by the main body: "and *he declared*, that it ſhould be his "endeavour to puſh the enemy into that "quarter." How rapid was the advance of this gentleman to the ſummit of military knowledge!

Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton landed in America in the year 1777, with the rank of Cornet of Dragoons, and in the beginning of January, 1781, we find him the primum mobile, the maſter ſpring which puts the whole machinery of the army in motion. It is a received maxim to liſten with caution to the hero of his own ſtory; but we are naturally prepoſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed in favour of thoſe who ſpeak modeſtly of themſelves, and honourably of others; my preſent object, however, is to conſider how far our author has followed the line which he declares himſelf to have preſcribed.

He ſays, page 220, "The diſtance "between Wynneſborough and King's "Mountain, or Wynneſborough and "Little Broad River, which would "have anſwered the ſame purpoſe, does "not exceed ſixty-five miles: Earl Corn-"wallis commenced his march on the "7th or 8th of January. It would be "mortifying to deſcribe the advantages "that might have reſulted from his "Lordſhip's arrival at the concerted "point, or to expatiate upon the cala-"mities which were produced by this "event."

The imputed cenſures in the above paſſage demand a diſpaſſionate inveſtigation. Let us admit, that the poſſeſſion of King's

Mountain was a point preconcerted between Earl Cornwallis and Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton; it ſhall alſo be granted, that the attainment of that eminence by the main body, was a meaſure well calculated to cut off Morgan's retreat; neither is it meant to be denied that Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton uſed means to overtake the American detachment which do him no diſcredit: but granting all that, it is contended, that the rapidity of his movements did not afford Earl Cornwallis time to arrive at the point abovementioned; and it ſhall be demonſtrated, that an allowance of additional time for that arrival, was entirely in the power of our author; and farther, that it would have been attended with many conſpicuous advantages.

His mode of reaſoning, in the preſent inſtance, is invidious in the extreme, with reſpect to the General, and equally contemptuous of the judgment of every officer in his army: it is a bold ſtroke of impoſition

poſition even upon the common ſenſe of mankind: becauſe it will be readily granted, by every perſon, that a march of ſixty-five miles may eaſily be made out in the courſe of ten days, he, therefore, eagerly takes advantage of that obvious fact, to ſupport his uniform drift, of attempting to render the General reprehenſible. And as his Lordſhip commenced his march on the 7th or 8th, if difficulties and obſtacles, which our author artfully conceals, had not intervened, he might certainly have arrived at the place of deſtination by the 17th. But let us take a candid and impartial review of this matter, and it will clearly appear, that this cenſurer of his General's conduct had no right to expect the arrival of the army at King's Mountain, by the time which he ſpecifies.

We have his own teſtimony, pages 219 and 248, of his having received due information that the army on the 14th had not got farther than Bull Run.

This then is the point, both with reſpect to time and diſtance, from which we are to eſtimate the movements of the main body, as well as of the detachment; and hence are we to fix the criterion from which we are to derive our judgment of the ſubſequent conduct of both commanders.

The diſtance of Bull Run, where the General was on the 14th, from King's Mountain, is forty-five miles. Our author's poſition at the ſame period of time, was not more remote from the ſpot of his precipitate engagement with the enemy than thirty miles. This engagement took place on the morning of the 17th, before one hour of day light had paſſed. Inſtead therefore of an allowance of ten days, for a march of ſixty-five miles, we now find, in fact, that the General had only two days to perform a march of forty-five miles; and it is but bare juſtice to point out the many obſtacles which the army, on this occaſion, had to ſurmount.

mount. Both the ground through which his Lordſhip had to paſs, and the weather, oppoſed all poſſibility of a quick progreſs. Every ſtep of his march was obſtructed by creeks and rivulets, all of which were ſwelled to a prodigious height, and many rendered quite unfordable, in conſequence of a heavy fall of rain for ſeveral weeks; to theſe difficulties were alſo added, the incumbrance of a train of artillery, military ſtores, baggage, and all the other neceſſary appointments of an army. On the other hand, our author had only to lead on about a thouſand light troops, in the beſt condition, and as little incumbered as poſſible; with theſe, as I can aſſuredly atteſt, by ſwimming horſes and felling trees for bridges, means which were impracticable to his Lordſhip's army, he came up with the enemy much ſooner than was expected.

I have now laid before you a ſimple and fair ſtatement of the advance, as well

of the army as of the detachment, previous to the unfortunate action at Cowpens, and furniſhed you with a clue by which you may unravel the windings and doublings of our author, in anxious queſt of materials for cenſure of a General irreprehenſible in every part of his conduct, during the whole of this march.

Our author's words, page 220, are, "Earl Cornwallis might have conceived, "that by attending to the ſituation of the "enemy, and of the country, and by co-"vering his light troops, he would, in "all probability, have alternately brought "Generals Morgan and Green into his "power by co-operative movements: he "might alſo have concluded, that all his "parties that were beaten in the country, "if they had no corps to give them in-"ſtant ſupport or refuge, muſt be com-"pletely deſtroyed. Many inſtances of "this nature occurred during the war. "The fall of Ferguſon was a recent and "melancholy example: that cataſtrophe

"put

"put a period to the firſt expedition into "North Carolina, and the affair of the "Cowpens overſhadowed the commence-"ment of the ſecond."

The real province of an hiſtorian is to relate facts; by this principle he ſhould abide; whenever he deviates from it, and indulges a fanciful vein of conjecture concerning probable contingencies, if not totally diveſted of partiality, he is certain of miſleading his readers. That our author was not aware of the force of this remark, is ſufficiently evinced. His Lordſhip's attention to the ſituation of the enemy, of the country, and of his own detachments, has been, with reſpect to Ferguſon, already pointed out. He neither adviſed the advance of that unfortunate partiſan into the back ſettlements, nor was even appriſed of it; having, therefore, no concern in the meaſure, he could not, in any juſtice, be reſponſible for its conſequences, and it is the height of illi-

berality to throw reproach upon him on that account.

Of all men, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton ſhould be the laſt to cenſure Earl Cornwallis for not deſtroying Morgan's force; as it will appear that the proviſion made for that ſervice was perfectly ſufficient; and though it can by no means be admitted that his Lordſhip could have manœuvred ſo as to get General Green into his power after the defeat at Cowpens; it may, however, be affirmed, that if the troops loſt on that occaſion had eſcaped the misfortune which befel them, and had been combined with the Britiſh force at the battle of Guildford, the victory muſt have been much more deciſive; and General Green would probably have brought off as few of his army, as his predeceſſor in command, General Gates, did at Camden.

I will

I will hazard an additional reflection: Had Earl Cornwallis not been deprived of his light troops, the blockade at York Town had never taken place; and the enemies of our country, in conſequence of the ſignal ſucceſſes which attended a Rodney and a Heathfield, would have ſued for that peace, the terms of which they afterwards preſcribed.

As the effect of the defeat at Cowpens was of ſo ſerious a nature, it becomes neceſſary to ſtate the purpoſe for which Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton was detached; to inquire how far the force placed under his command was adequate to the ſervice it was ſent to perform; to examine whether proper uſe was made of the advantages which occurred on the morning of the 17th of January, both before and during the action, and to trace to its very ſource, a fountain that overflowed with blood,

blood, and swept along its torrent destruction to the interests of Great Britain.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER X.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE defeat of the Britiſh detachment at Cowpens, which I informed you would be the ſubject of this letter, has been variouſly repreſented by different authors; it is a point, however, in which they all agree, that at a particular ſtage of the engagement the whole of the American infantry gave way, and, that the legion-cavalry, though three times the number of thoſe of the enemy, contributed nothing to complete their confuſion.

Ramſey

Ramſey ſtates this action as follows, Volume II. page 196: "The Britiſh had "two field-pieces, and the ſuperiority of "numbers in the proportion of five to "four, and particularly of cavalry, in "the proportion of three to one." And again, "General Morgan had obtained "early intelligence of Tarleton's force "and advances, and drew up his men in "two lines. The whole of the ſouthern "militia, with one hundred and ninety "from North Carolina, under Major "M'Dowal, were put under the command "of Colonel Pickens. Theſe formed "the firſt line, and were advanced a few "hundred yards before the ſecond, with "orders to form on the right of the ſe-"cond when forced to retire. The ſe-"cond line conſiſted of the light infan-"try, under Lieutenant Colonel Howard, "and a ſmall corps of Virginia militia ri-"flemen. Lieutenant Colonel Waſh-"ington, with his cavalry, and about "forty-five militia men mounted and "equipped with ſwords, under Lieutenant

"Colonel

"Colonel M'Call, were drawn up at "ſome diſtance, in the rear of the whole." He farther ſays, "The American militia "were obliged to retire, but were ſoon "rallied by their officers. The Britiſh ad- "vanced rapidly, and engaged the ſecond "line, which, after a moſt obſtinate con- "flict, was compelled to retreat to the "cavalry."

The Marquis de Chaſtellux, in his Travels in North America, accounts for this defeat thus: "General Morgan drew "up his men in order of battle, in an "open wood, and divided his riflemen "upon the two wings, ſo as to form "in the line a kind of *tennaille*, which "collected the whole fire both directly "and obliquely on the center of the "Engliſh; but after the firſt diſcharge, "he made ſo dangerous a movement, that "had he commanded the beſt troops in "the world, I ſhould be at a loſs to ac- "count for it. He ordered the whole line "to wheel to the right, and after retreating

"thirty

"thirty or forty paces, made them halt, "and re-commence the fire.' And again, "Whatever was the motive of "this ſingular manœuvre, the reſult "of it was the defeat of Tarleton, whoſe "troops gave way on all ſides, without a "poſſibility of rallying. Fatigued by a "very long march, they were ſoon over-"taken by the American militia."

The Annual Regiſter for 1781 gives the following account: On the American militia giving way, "their ſecond line "having opened on the right and left, "as well to lead the victors on, as to af-"ford a clear paſſage to the fugitives, as "ſoon as the former were far enough ad-"vanced, poured in a cloſe and deadly "fire on both ſides, which took the "moſt fatal effect." Our author is ſo materially concerned, as the principal agent in this ſcene of ruin, that an impartial account is not to be expected from him; his ſtatement of his own conduct on that day, if authentick, would

do honour to the immortal Frederick!

The Marquis's expoſition of the cauſe of the defeat, in ſpite of his aſſertion, that it has the ſanction of General Morgan, is flimſy and erroneous. The editor of the Annual Regiſter has been deceived; conſequently, of theſe ſeveral accounts, that given by Doctor Ramſey deſerves moſt attention.

I was upon the detachment in queſtion, and the narrative which I now offer has been ſubmitted to the judgment of ſeveral reſpectable officers, who were alſo in this action, and it has met with their intire approbation.

Towards the latter end of December, 1780, Earl Cornwallis received intelligence, that General Morgan had advanced to the weſtward of the Broad River, with about one thouſand men. Two-thirds of this force were militia, about

about one hundred of them cavalry, the reſt continentals. His intention was to threaten Ninety Six, and to diſtreſs the weſtern frontiers. To fruſtrate theſe deſigns, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton was detached with the light and legion-infantry, the fuſileers, the firſt battalion of the 71ſt regiment, about three hundred and fifty cavalry, two field-pieces, and an adequate proportion of men from the royal artillery; in all near a thouſand ſtrong. This corps, after a progreſs of ſome days, arrived at the vicinity of Ninety Six, a poſt which was then commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Allen. An offer of a reinforcement from that garriſon was made to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton. The offer was rejected; and the detachment, by fatiguing marches, attained the ground which Morgan had quitted a few hours before: This poſition was taken about ten o'clock on the evening of the 16th of January. The purſuit re-commenced by two o'clock the next morning, and was rapidly continued

nued through marſhes and broken grounds till day-light, when the enemy were diſcovered in front. Two of their videttes were taken ſoon after; theſe gave information that General Morgan had halted, and prepared for action; he had formed his troops as deſcribed by Ramſey, in an open wood, ſecured neither in front, flank, nor rear. Without the delay of a ſingle moment, and in deſpite of extreme fatigue, the light-legion infantry and fuſileers were ordered to form in line. Before this order was put in execution, and while Major Newmarſh, who commanded the latter corps, was poſting his officers, the line, far from complete, was led to the attack by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton himſelf. The ſeventy-firſt regiment and cavalry, who had not as yet diſentangled themſelves from the bruſhwood with which Thickelle Creek abounds, were directed to form, and wait for orders. The military valour of Britiſh troops, when not entirely diveſted of the powers neceſſary to its exertion, was not to be

reſiſted by an American militia. They gave way on all quarters, and were purſued to their continentals: the ſecond line, now attacked, made a ſtout reſiſtance. Captain Ogilvie, with his troop, which did not exceed forty men, was ordered to charge the right flank of the enemy. He cut his way through their line, but, expoſed to a heavy fire, and charged at the ſame time by the whole of Waſhington's dragoons, was compelled to retreat in confuſion. The reſerve, which as yet had no orders to move from its firſt poſition, and conſequently remained near a mile diſtant, was now directed to advance. When the line felt "the advance of the ſeventy-firſt, all "the infantry again moved on: the con-"tinentals and backwoods-men gave "ground: the Britiſh ruſhed forwards: "an order was diſpatched to the ca-"valry to charge *." This order, however, if ſuch was then thought of, being either not delivered or diſobeyed,

* Vide Tarleton's Campaigns, page 217.

they

they ſtood aloof, without availing themſelves of the faireſt opportunity of reaping the laurels which lay before them. The infantry were not in condition to overtake the fugitives; the latter had not marched thirty miles in the courſe of the laſt fortnight; the former, during that time, had been in motion day and night. A number, not leſs than two-thirds of the Britiſh infantry officers, had already fallen, and nearly the ſame proportion of privates; fatigue, however, enfeebled the purſuit, much more than loſs of blood. Morgan ſoon diſcovered that the legion-cavalry did not advance, and that the infantry, though well diſpoſed, were unable to come up with his corps: he ordered Colonel Waſhington, with his dragoons, to cover his retreat, and to check the purſuit. He was obeyed; and the protection thus afforded, gave him an opportunity of rallying his ſcattered forces. They formed, renewed the attack, and charged in their turn. In diſorder from the purſuit, unſupported by

the cavalry, deprived of the aſſiſtance of the cannon, which in defiance of the utmoſt exertions of thoſe who had them in charge, were now left behind, the advance of the Britiſh fell back, and communicated a panick to others, which ſoon became general: a total rout enſued. Two hundred and fifty horſe which had not been engaged, fled through the woods with the utmoſt precipitation, bearing down ſuch officers as oppoſed their flight: the cannon were ſoon ſeized by the Americans, the detachment from the train being either killed or wounded in their defence; and the infantry were eaſily overtaken, as the cauſe which had retarded the purſuit, had now an equal effect in impeding the retreat: diſpirited on many accounts, they ſurrendered at diſcretion. Even at this late ſtage of the defeat, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, with no more than fifty horſe, heſitated not to charge the whole of Waſhington's cavalry, though ſupported by the continentals; it was a ſmall body of officers,

and

and a detachment of the ſeventeenth regiment of dragoons, who preſented themſelves on this deſperate occaſion; the loſs ſuſtained was in proportion to the danger of the enterpriſe, and the whole body was repulſed.

Whether in actions of importance, or ſlight ſkirmiſhes, I every where can trace exaggerated accounts of this author's proweſs. On his retreat after the above defeat, he ſays, page 218, "Another "party of the Americans, who had ſeized "upon the baggage of the Britiſh troops "on the road from the late encampment, "were diſperſed." Earl Cornwallis, in his diſpatches to the Commander in Chief, writes, that "Lieutenant Colonel "Tarleton retook the baggage of the "corps, and cut to pieces the detach-"ment of the enemy who had taken "poſſeſſion of it; and after deſtroying "what they could not conveniently "bring off, retired with the remain-"der, unmoleſted, to Hamilton's Ford." And the Annual Regiſter for 1781 ſays,

that our author "had the fortune of re-
"taking the baggage, the ſlender guard
"in whoſe cuſtody it was left being cut to
"pieces." All theſe miſrepreſentations have originated from one and the ſame ſource; the fact however ſtands thus:

A detachment from each corps, under the command of Lieutenant Fraſer of the 71ſt regiment (who was afterwards killed at York Town), had been left at ſome diſtance to guard the baggage; early intelligence of the defeat was conveyed to this officer by ſome friendly Americans; what part of the baggage could not be carried off he immediately deſtroyed, and with his men mounted on the waggon, and ſpare horſes, he retreated to Earl Cornwallis unmoleſted; nor did he, on this occaſion, ſee any of the American horſe or foot, or of the party then under our author's directions. This was the only body of infantry that eſcaped, the reſt were either killed or made priſoners. The dragoons joined the army in two ſeparate diviſions;

one

one arrived in the neighbourhood of the Britiſh encampment upon the evening of the ſame day, at which time his Lordſhip had the mortification to learn the defeat of his detachment; the other, under Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, appeared next morning.

I am, &c.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR SIR,

AS a circumſtantial detail of the action at Cowpens was given to you in my laſt letter, obſervations upon the cauſes of that diſaſter ſhall be the ſubject of this.

You have already my opinion, that Earl Cornwallis is incapable of wilful miſrepreſentation; leaving then to the judgment of others, the propriety of producing

ducing a confidential letter*, written by his Lordſhip in the goodneſs of his heart, evidently with deſign to conſole our author under a ſevere misfortune, and never meant for publication; I only contend, that this letter, is altogether inadequate to the purpoſe to which this journaliſt has converted it, that of transferring the blame from himſelf to the troops.

It has been before ſhewn, that the diſpatches of Earl Cornwallis, with reſpect to the action of Blackſtocks, had beſtowed a laurel on Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, which ſhould have adorned the

* Vide page 252. From Earl Cornwallis to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton. "You have forfeited no part "of my eſteem as an officer by the unfortunate event "of the action of the 17th: The means you uſed to "bring the enemy to action were able and maſterly, "and muſt ever do you honour. Your diſpoſition was "unexceptionable; the total miſbehaviour of the troops "could alone have deprived you of the glory which was "ſo juſtly your due."

brows

brows of General Sumpter, but then, as now, his Lordſhip drew his information from a corrupted fountain. That the "unqualified deciſion" of that nobleman in favour of our author, in regard to the action of Cowpens, was made "without "any opportunity of perſonal obſerva-"tion," has been happily noticed by others *. It is a tranſcript of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's report, and therefore, like the evidence of a man in his own cauſe, totally inadmiſſible.

Our author, through the whole of his narrative, ſeems to have had Julius Cæſar in view; but Cæſar's mind was above any occaſion for recourſe to vanity, oſtentation, or detraction. It was his pride to beſtow due praiſe on deſerving officers, while this journaliſt diſtinguiſhes himſelf by laviſhing reproaches directly on his General, and obliquely on others who had the misfortune of ſerving under his

* Critical Review, May 1787.

command.

command. As an individual on this detachment, credit may be given me for an acquaintance with every circumſtance which is here deſcribed. If to be diſintereſted is neceſſary for the inveſtigation of truth, I come ſo far qualified for this taſk. Unconnected with party, devoid of ſpleen, and too unimportant to be affected by general reflections on collective bodies of military men, candour and impartiality may be allowed me---But to proceed.

The firſt error in judgment to be imputed to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, on the morning of the 17th of January, 1781, is, the not halting his troops before he engaged the enemy. Had he done ſo, it was evident that the following advantages would have been the reſult of his conduct. General Morgan's force and ſituation might have been diſtinctly viewed, under cover of a very ſuperior cavalry; the Britiſh infantry, fatigued with rapid marches, day and night, for

ſome

ſome time paſt, as has been already obſerved, might have had reſt and refreſhment; a detachment from the ſeveral corps left with the baggage, together with batt-men, and officers ſervants, would have had time to come up, and join in the action. The artillery all this time might have been playing on the enemy's front, or either flank, without riſque of inſult; the commandants of regiments, Majors M'Arthur and Newmarſh, officers who held commiſſions long before our author was born, and who had reputations to this day unimpeached, might have been conſulted, and, not to dwell on the enumeration of all the advantages which would have accrued from ſo judicious a delay, time would have been given for the approach of Earl Cornwallis to the preconcerted point, for the unattainment of which he has been ſo much and ſo unjuſtly cenſured.

The ſecond error was, the un-officer-like impetuoſity of directing the line to

advance

advance before it was properly formed, and before the reſerve had taken its ground; in conſequence of which, as might have been expected, the attack was premature, confuſed, and irregular.

The third error in this ruinous buſineſs, was the omiſſion of giving diſcretional powers to that judicious veteran M'Arthur, to advance with the reſerve, at the time that the front line was in purſuit of the militia, by which means the connection ſo neceſſary to troops engaged in the field was not preſerved.

His fourth error was, ordering Captain Ogilvie, with a troop, conſiſting of no more than forty men, to charge, before any impreſſion was made on the continentals, and before Waſhington's cavalry had been engaged.

The next, and the moſt deſtructive, for I will not pretend to follow him through all his errors, was in not bring-

ing

ing up a column of cavalry, and completing the rout, which, by his own acknowledgment, had commenced through the whole American infantry.

After what has been ſaid, there may not, perhaps, be a better criterion to judge of the conduct of thoſe corps, upon whom Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton has ſtamped the charge of "total miſbeha-"viour," than by an examination of the ſtate of diſcipline they were then under, of their general conduct upon every former occaſion, and of the loſs which they ſuſtained on this.

The fuſileers had ſerved with credit in America from the commencement of the war, and under an excellent officer, General Clarke, had attained the ſummit of military diſcipline: they had at this time, out of nine officers who were in the action, five * killed and wounded.

* Killed	Captain Helyar
	Lieut. Marſhal
Wounded	Major Newmarſh
	Lieutenant Harling
	Lieutenant L'Eſtrange

The firſt battalion of the 71ſt regiment, who had landed in Georgia in the year 1778, under the command of Sir Archibald Campbell, had eſtabliſhed their reputation in the ſeveral operations in that province, at Stono Ferry, at the ſieges of Savannah and Charleſtown, and at the battle of Camden. Now, not inferior to the 7th regiment in diſcipline, they were led by an officer of great experience, who had come into the Britiſh ſervice from the Scotch Dutch brigade: Out of ſixteen officers * which they had in the field, nine † were killed and wounded.

* Light companies of the 1ſt and 2d 71ſt included.

† Lieutenants { Macleod, Chiſholm } Killed

Lieutenants { Grant, Mackintoſh, Flint, Mackenzie, Sinclair, Forbes, Macleod } Wounded

The

The battalion of light infantry had ſignaliſed themſelves ſeparately on many occaſions. The company of the 16th regiment was well known by its ſervices in the army commanded by Major General Prevoſt; thoſe of the ſeventy-firſt regiment were diſtinguiſhed under Sir James Baird at the ſurpriſe of General Wayne in Pennſylvania, of Baylor's dragoons in New Jerſey, at Briar Creek in Georgia, at the capture and ſubſequent defence of Savannah, at the battle near Camden under Earl Cornwallis; and even Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton did them juſtice at the defeat of Sumpter, juſt after the laſt mentioned action *.

The light infantry company of the Prince of Wales's American regiment, when but newly raiſed and indifferently diſciplined, acquired reputation under General Tryon at Danbury; their only officer was here wounded †.

* Vide pages 113 and 114. † Lieut. Lindſay.

The

The infantry of the legion had ſeen much ſervice, and had always behaved well: this our author will ſurely not deny.

The troop of the ſeventeenth regiment of dragoons, when ordered into action, diſplayed that gallantry with which they had ſtamped their character on every former occaſion. They had here but two officers, both of whom were wounded, one mortally *. The detachment of artillery was totally annihilated.

Such were the troops whom this journaliſt has ſo ſeverely ſtigmatiſed. Few corps, in any age or country, will be found to have bled more freely.

It is an eſtabliſhed cuſtom in armies for the commanding officer, whether victorious or vanquiſhed, to account for the loſs which he has ſuſtained. In the

* Lieutenant Nettles. Cornet Patterſon, mortally.

preſent inſtance it requires no extraordinary ſagacity to diſcover, that Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had his own particular reaſons for withholding ſuch an account; and it is evident that had this loſs of officers, to which that of the ſoldiers probably bore a near proportion, been faithfully publiſhed, the veracity of our author's account might have been juſtly called in queſtion, and the cauſe of the defeat, inſtead of being left to a "*perhaps*," might have been reduced to a certainty.

In deſcribing the particular incidents of this action, our journaliſt ſays, page 221, "The extreme extenſion of the files "always expoſed the Britiſh regiments "and corps, and would, before this unfortunate affair, have been attended "with detrimental effect, had not the "multiplicity of lines with which they "generally fought, reſcued them from "ſuch imminent danger."

He

He ſtill continues to furniſh argument againſt himſelf; if his files were too extenſive, why did he not contract them? for he ſays, in the ſame page, that "the "diſpoſition was planned with coolneſs, "and executed without embarraſſment." Any other mode of attack, or diſpoſition, therefore, which he might have planned, would doubtleſs have been executed with equal promptitude. The latter part of this quotation is not leſs inconſiſtent. I would aſk Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton in what action, during the campaigns of which he treats, did the multiplicity of lines reſcue the Britiſh troops from imminent danger? and on what occaſion did their front line, or any part thereof, give way I believe it will be found that it fell to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton alone to lead the troops of Britain into a ſituation, from which they could be driven by an equal, or even by double or treble their number.

When Earl Cornwallis fought the memorable battle near Camden, his force, conſiderably under two thouſand men, was oppoſed by upwards of ſix thouſand. At Guildford, his Lordſhip, with not one third the number of his enemy, obtained a glorious victory over General Greene, the beſt commander in the American ſervice; and Lord Rawdon upon Hobkirk's-Hill, routed the ſame General, who had now added experience to his other talents, and this, though his numbers compared with his enemy, did not bear the laſt mentioned proportion. Many other proofs could be brought of the fallacy of our author's reaſoning, but theſe which have been adduced will, I truſt, ſufficiently ſhew the impoſſibility of forming a multiplicity of lines, with ſo manifeſt an inferiority of numbers; nay, I venture to affirm, that the diſparity of force at Cowpens was ſmaller than it had been in any engagement during the ſouthern campaigns, conſequently, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had

had it in his power to engage with greater advantages than occurred either previous to his defeat or ſince.

Ramſey has well obſerved, Volume II. page 203, "Whilſt Lord Cornwallis was "anticipating, in imagination, a rich har- "veſt of glory, from a rapid ſucceſſion "of victories, he received the intelligence, "no leſs unwelcome than unexpected, of "the complete overthrow of the detach- "ment led by Lieutenant Colonel Tarle- "ton. So contemptible, from their con- "duct at Camden, was his Lordſhip's "opinion of the American militia—ſo "unlimited was his confidence in the "courage and abilities of Lieutenant Co- "lonel Tarleton, that, of all improbable "events, none ſeemed to him more im- "probable, than that an inferior force, "two-thirds militia, ſhould gain ſuch a "deciſive advantage over his favourite "hero."

I have now done with the action at

Cowpens, and on this occaſion confeſs that I am not without my feelings as an individual for ſo wanton an attack on characters and entire corps, whoſe conduct had been, till then, unſullied. There is not an officer who ſurvived that diſaſtrous day, who is not far beyond the reach of ſlander and detraction; and with reſpect to the dead, I leave to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton all the ſatisfaction which he can enjoy, from reflecting that he led a number of brave men to deſtruction, and then uſed every effort in his power to damn their fame with poſterity.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY inability to follow Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton in his accounts of the progreſs of the Britiſh army through North Carolina and Virginia, is, unfortunately for me, of a nature* which precludes the neceſſity of apology. However, were I warranted to judge of minute particulars from his ſtatement of important matters, I would ſay,

* Wounds at Cowpens.

that ſimilar miſrepreſentations appear to pervade his whole work. The following inſtances will corroborate this aſſertion.

On the 26th of April, 1781, the Royal army commenced its march northwards from Wilmington. Our journaliſt ſays, page 284, "At this period, Major Ge-"neral Leſlie's health being greatly im-"paired by the climate, his phyſicians "adviſed his return to a colder latitude "than the Carolinas and Virginia; upon "which he prepared to embark for "New York." And page 292, he ſays, "About this time (being one month af-"terwards) the arrival of a reinforce-"ment from New York for the Cheſa-"peak army, was announced to Earl "Cornwallis: the Commander in Chief "had diſpatched General Leſlie, whoſe "*health had benefited by the ſea air* on the "late voyage, and who was always zea-"lous for the publick ſervice, with the "ſeventeenth and forty-third regiments,

"and

"and two battalions of Anſpach, into "Virginia, upon receiving news of the "march from Wilmington."

From theſe paſſages it muſt be inferred, that General Leſlie embarked at Wilmington—arrived at New York—received orders from the Commander in Chief to proceed to the Cheſapeak with a reinforcement—had been benefited by the ſea air—landed in Virginia—and the whole of this in the courſe of one month. An attentive reader will ſee, page 343, a letter from Earl Cornwallis to Sir Henry Clinton, dated Byrd's Plantation in Virginia, May 26, 1781, in which his Lordſhip's words are, "The "arrival of the reinforcement has made "me eaſy about Portſmouth for the pre- "ſent. *I have ſent* General Leſlie thither "with the ſeventeenth regiment, and "the two battalions of Anſpach, keep- "ing the forty-third with the army." As theſe circumſtances ſo glaringly contradict each other; it is from the moſt careful

careful inquiry, and the beſt information that I am enabled to declare, that General Leſlie's health, however bad, prevented him not from a zealous performance of his duty, as ſecond in command, during the whole of this very fatiguing march; nor was he all that time nearer to the ſea than Wilmington, and in general upwards of one hundred miles from it, though ſo much benefited by the viſionary voyage which our author repreſents him to have made.

Before the departure of Earl Cornwallis from Wilmington, it is well known that various opinions had been formed of the meaſures the moſt proper to be adopted by the army; the opinion of many was in favour of the plan of following General Greene to South Carolina; the advice of others, which ſucceeded, was to march to Virginia; among the latter Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton does not wiſh to be claſſed *. The event

* Vide page 283 and 284.

of the march proving unfortunate, he either means to extricate himſelf from blame in adviſing it, or cannot reſiſt his uſual practice of cenſure. General report, however, ſays, that he actually recommended the movement of the army which then took place, and expreſſed his diſapprobation of a return to South Carolina, by declaring, that his Lordſhip might as well order the throats of his horſes to be cut, as adopt that meaſure. I would aſk this journaliſt a plain queſtion; did he not ſay to an officer on the route to Virginia, at a time when circumſtances appeared particularly favourable, "that *this march was a child of his own*, "and that he gloried in it?" This converſation he held with an officer* of equal rank with himſelf, who by his zeal, courage, and activity, rendered the moſt eſſential ſervices in the Southern provinces, though too modeſt to become the herald of his own actions. If the above

* Colonel JOHN HAMILTON.

queſtion

queſtion cannot be anſwered in the negative, the reflections of this author on cauſes, after the effects are known, will appear as impotent, as his other attacks on the character of a nobleman, which will be venerated whilſt a Britiſh ſoldier exiſts.

Leaving the farther inveſtigation of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's journal of the operations of the army under Earl Cornwallis to others, I proceed to make ſome obſervations upon his Appendix.

You was early in poſſeſſion of my opinion, that the performance before us is deficient in every eſſential requiſite to an hiſtory, and totally undeſerving of that name. The longer I have continued to examine it, the ſtronger is my conviction of the truth of this opinion, and that the better founded will his judgment be, who may conſider it as an incorrect and partial journal of military events, in which the

the author himſelf, directly or indirectly, had always ſome concern. But its claim to being eſteemed an Hiſtory of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America, is more truly ridiculous, than that to an Hiſtory of the World, if, according to a certain author, he had defined the world to be a circle of a given diameter, himſelf the center, and if, not intirely taken up with the contemplation of his own excellencies, he had really given an impartial and accurate detail of all the actions of all the beings, who moved, for a certain time, around his orbit.

Though it certainly did not require the abilities of a Tacitus, or a Livy, to comprehend and deſcribe the operations of the Britiſh and American armies, in four adjacent provinces for two years, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, however, has ſhewn himſelf intirely unequal to the taſk. Always confined to the ſingle point of

of relating events in his own neighbourhood, he has ſometimes intirely omitted accounts of ſerious actions, gallant defences, and important operations in other places *; and at the end of his book he gives, in his uſual manner of deſcription, the "elegant campaign" of 1781 in South Carolina, under the accommodating title of an APPENDIX.

This campaign was conducted by Lord Rawdon in every reſpect to his honour, and deſcribed in the official letters of that nobleman with admirable preciſion. When the declining ſtate of his Lordſhip's health obliged him to relinquiſh the command of the army, its ſubſequent operations were circumſtantially narrated by Colonels Steuart and Balfour.

* The actions fought by Colonel Innes on the Enoree, and Major Dunlap in Long Cane; the defence of Fort Golphin on the Savannah; the operations of Lieutenant Colonel Craig upon Cape Fear, and thoſe of Lieutenant Colonel Small on the Santee, &c.

A very

A very large proportion of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's work is mere compilation. Take from his Appendix three letters from Lord Rawdon, one from Colonel Steuart, and one from Colonel Balfour, which had already been publiſhed in this country; ſeparate alſo from it three letters from General Greene, and one from General Marion, likewiſe formerly publiſhed, and you will find an Appendix calculated "*to render the work* "*complete**," reduced to a ſkeleton. Further, detach extracts from the Remembrancer and Annual Regiſter, and this boaſted completion of a work ſo oſtentatious, and that promiſes ſo much, will, in conſequence of ſuch diſmemberment, vaniſh into vapour. After all, ſo long as he confines himſelf to the ſimple tranſcription of theſe official letters, it is out of his power to miſlead; but whenever he ventures to connect them, and adopts the errors of periodical publications, he is altogether himſelf.

* Vide page 459.

The

The epithet of an "untried * enemy" is neither applicable to Lord Rawdon, nor to the troops which he commanded, as both his Lordſhip and a great part of his army had been in the action near Camden with Earl Cornwallis, and on many other ſervices.

His information is extremely defective as to the reduction of Auguſta. He has done little more than tranſcribe ſome of the ſummonſes and anſwers. He neither points out the formidable ſtate of the American army, nor relates the variety of ſtratagems that the brave Lieutenant Colonel Brown employed in its defence. As uſual with this writer, the friends of the officers who fell are furniſhed with no record of their death †.

* Vide page 459.

† Lieutenants Simcoe and Camp, killed—Lieutenant Hybert and others, wounded.

No

No juſtice is done to the gallantry of Lieutenant M'Kay, who commanded at Fort Watſon;—the bravery diſplayed in its defence, and his wounds are alike unnoticed.

Of the defence of Ninety Six by Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, which I before obſerved was one of the moſt brilliant events of the war in that country, this author appears extremely ignorant; and the few circumſtances of which he takes any notice are erroneous throughout.

A detail of the defence of that place, written by an officer * upon whoſe veracity I can rely, accompanies this letter, as alſo an account of the reduction of the iſland of New Providence. It is unneceſſary to aſſure you, that the gentleman who furniſhed me with this detail was upon the ſpot, as it wears authenticity

* Lieut. Hatton, late of the New Jerſey Volunteers, now of the twenty-third regiment.

upon the face of it; and yet, from the diametrical oppoſition of his account, to many particulars of that of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, if any credit could be given to the latter, you would be tempted to doubt of the actual preſence of the former in this tranſaction.

Of the nature of the fortifications, the readers of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's journal are left intirely in the dark, as he no where mentions whether they were regular or irregular, ſtrong or weak, extenſive or compact. They might have been, for any thing he ſays to the contrary, a tremendous citadel, an inſignificant redoubt, or a ſimple entrenchment. The enemy and the beſieged might have been either provided with heavy cannon, or the contrary.

His aſſertion in page 497, that "the "American artillery had failed in their "effect," is deſtitute of foundation. The account of this ſiege already mentioned, ſhews

ſhews that the work upon the left, which preſerved a communication with the water, was rendered untenable by the artillery of the beſiegers. It was abandoned by us, and taken poſſeſſion of by them on the 17th of June. But our journaliſt has fallen into this egregious miſtake, by not having, to uſe his own language, "penetration enough to diſcover *," that the letter of Lord Rawdon, of the 5th of June, page 479, could not convey any information of the execution done by the cannon of the enemy for fourteen days ſubſequent to its date.

Page 485 he ſays, that "the works "were completed." This was ſo far from being the fact, that on the morning of the 21ſt of May, when the enemy had broke ground, the works were unfiniſhed, and the platforms of the Star in no condition to receive guns.

* Vide page 99.

In page 497, he proves to demonſtration how miſerable his information had been. According to him the attack was made "upon the 19th of June, before "day;" and afterwards he ſays, General Greene put an end to the aſſault "by "calling off the remainder before day-"light." The truth however is, that the Americans aſſaulted the Star upon the 18th of June at noon.

As uſual with this journaliſt, no notice whatever is taken of the officers who bled upon that occaſion. Had he commanded at Ninety Six, in all human probability volumes would have been written upon the proweſs then exhibited, and monodies on the loſs even of his horſes. But the gallantry of Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, and of his garriſon, will be remembered with admiration, when theſe effuſions of vanity "ſhall be carried down "the ſtream of oblivion."

Nothing

Nothing can be more unfortunate than this author in his extracts. If errors creep into a periodical print, he is ſure to adopt them. Page 496, he aſſigns, as one of General Greene's motives for declining to engage the Royal army, upon their march to the relief of Ninety Six, his underſtanding that the Britiſh troops were "freſh." Now, that the editor of an Annual Regiſter might fall into ſuch a miſtake is by no means extraordinary; but an aſſertion of this nature from Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, who muſt have been acquainted with ſituations and diſtances in that country, is not to be excuſed.

The greateſt part of the army which Lord Rawdon commanded at that time, had on the 10th of May evacuated Camden, from which time to the 6th of June, they had been in continual motion, from Camden to Nelſon's Ferry, to the junction of the roads from Congaree to M'Cord's Ferry, to the Ewtaws and to Monk's

Corner. The other part of this army was the flank companies of three regiments juſt landed from Ireland. The whole moved upon the 7th of June, and made out a march of one hundred and eighty miles in the hotteſt weather, through a deſerted and moſt ſultry country, in thirteen days. Theſe troops were then, in every reſpect, in a ſituation the reverſe of being freſh. Though this had not been quite evident, the journaliſt himſelf, page 486, ſhews that "Lord "Rawdon preſſed his march with all the "rapidity which the exceſſive heat of the "weather would permit." And in page 498, he deſcribes the troops which he before pronounced freſh, "ſpent with "fatigue and overcome with heat." Thus does a viſionary journaliſt detail his curious conjectures, and then, with a fatality which never forſakes him, contradict himſelf.

In this Appendix he appears with a peculiar ill grace; he cannot even pretend

pretend to the ſmalleſt participation in the tranſactions which he deſcribes; while in the foregoing part of his work the name of TARLETON is conſtantly exhibited, like the taliſman of a necromancer, poſſeſſing a charm which enhances the glory of victory, and palliates the diſgrace of defeat.

In reading the work of the American hiſtorian, we cannot help admiring the laudable ambition which he diſcovers in deſcribing the atchievements of his countrymen, and the elegant elegiac ſtyle in which he laments the loſs of thoſe who fell *. But when his zeal betrays him into unmerited cenſures on Colonels Balfour, Moncreif, and other Britiſh officers; when he would perſuade us that one hundred and eleven Britiſh ſoldiers were captured by three Americans, and that the brother of an Engliſh Duke ſolicited a commiſſion in the ſervice of Congreſs;

* Colonels Lawrens, Williams, Huger and others.

we are compelled to deplore ſuch a mixture of alloy with ſhining abilities.

He has engaged my eſteem for having done no more than juſtice to Ferguſon, and no leſs than juſtice to Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton; his ſentiments of the former are already in your poſſeſſion, and with reſpect to the latter, read and judge *.

" Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had hi-
" therto acquired diſtinguiſhed reputa-
" tion, but he was greatly indebted for his
" military fame to good fortune and acci-
" dent. In all his previous engagements
" he either had the advantage of ſur-
" priſing an incautious enemy—of at-
" tacking them when panick-ſtruck after
" recent defeats—or of being oppoſed to
" undiſciplined militia. He had gathered
" no laurels by hard fighting againſt an
" equal force; his repulſe on this occaſion

* Vide Ramſey, Vol. II. Page 200.

" (Cowpens)

"(Cowpens) did more eſſential injury to "the Britiſh intereſt, than was compen- "ſated by all his victories. Tarleton's "defeat was the firſt link, in a grand "chain of cauſes, which finally drew "down ruin, both in North and South "Carolina, on the Royal intereſt."

I am, &c.

SIEGE

SIEGE

OF

NINETY SIX.

NOTWITHSTANDING the brilliant victory obtained by a corps of his Majeſty's troops, led by the Right Honourable Lord Rawdon, over the American army, commanded by General Greene, on the 25th of April, 1781, at Hobkirk's Hill, the diſaffection of the inhabitants of South Carolina, a perfidious people, whoſe allegiance to the Britiſh government

government neither promiſes could bind nor oaths ſecure*, became ſo general,

* A particular inſtance of this occurred in the caſe of COLONEL ISAAC HAYNE. Upon the entrance of General Greene into South Carolina, Mr. Hayne accepted a commiſſion in the American ſervice in a ſecret manner, ſoon after which he came to Charleſtown, renewed his oath of allegiance to the King, and at his own requeſt was appointed to the command of a corps of militia. When he had remained long enough in that garriſon to obtain every poſſible intelligence, partly by perſuaſion, partly by force, he occaſioned the revolt of the whole body which he commanded to the Americans. The firſt advice which our commanders received of this treachery, was the account of an expedition in which Mr. Hayne ſurpriſed a number of ſick and wounded Britiſh ſoldiers, within two miles of Charleſtown, where he was charged with committing ſome extraordinary acts of barbarity. He was immediately after taken in arms againſt that government which he had ſo recently ſworn to ſupport; a Court of Enquiry identified his perſon, and he was executed without farther trial. The Americans complained loudly of this proceeding, as an infraction of the law of nations, affecting to forget that this line of conduct had been adopted by both armies during the war, and that they had executed the Adjutant General of the Britiſh army, upon the report of a Board of Officers only. The unhappy Mr. Hayne was ſaid to be a good character in private life, but private virtues could not atone for publick vices. If amiable manners, and the poſſeſſion of every accompliſhment which adorns the officer and the gentleman, could have averted an ignominious death, the lamented ANDRE would not have expired upon a gibbet!

A late American writer, in attempting to palliate the violation of the ſecond oath of allegiance, taken by Colonel Hayne, on the jeſuitical principle of mental reſervation, could not, ſeriouſly, mean a compliment either to his underſtanding or his integrity.

that

that it was neceſſary for his Lordſhip to abandon Camden, and march towards the ſea coaſt, for the purpoſe of receiving expected reinforcements, covering the lower country, and for the protection of even Charleſtown itſelf. In purſuance of this reſolution, the Royal army fell back to Nelſon's Ferry, and Lord Rawdon diſpatched repeated expreſſes to Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, then commanding at Ninety Six, a poſt upon the Weſtern frontiers of the province, with directions to withdraw his garriſon, join that of Auguſta, on the confines of Georgia, at about ſixty miles diſtance, and, taking the command of the whole, act as occaſion might require; but none of theſe orders having reached Ninety Six, in conſequence of the conſtant interception of his Lordſhip's diſpatches, as alſo of thoſe of Colonel Balfour, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger remained intirely ignorant of the ſituation of the army commanded by Lord Rawdon; nor had he any other advice of the action near Camden, and the ſubſequent

ſequent evacuation of that place, but from an American officer who was made priſoner.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CRUGER being, from unavoidable neceſſity, thus left to himſelf, very reaſonably concluded, that a large corps, if not the whole of the American army would aſſail him, and in this conjuncture began to put the works of the place in the beſt poſſible ſtate of defence.

The village of Ninety Six derives its name from being that number of miles from the town of Keewee, in the country of the Cherokees; its houſes, which were intirely of wood, were compriſed within a ſtockade. The commandant immediately ſet the whole garriſon, both officers and men, to work, to throw up a bank, parapet high, around this ſtockade, and to ſtrengthen it with an abbatis. Upon the left of the village was a ravine, through which ran a rivulet, that ſupplied the

place

place with water. The county priſon was fortified, and commanded the ravine upon one ſide, and a ſtockade to the left covered it on the other; but the only part of theſe works which deſerved the name of regular, was upon the right. This was planned ſome time before, by Lieutenant Haldane of the engineers, Aid de Camp to Earl Cornwallis; it conſiſted of ſixteen ſalient and re-entering angles, with a dry ditch, fraiſe and abbatis, and was called the STAR.

The indefatigable induſtry of the garriſon, animated by the example of the commandant, had, on this occaſion, erected block houſes in the village, made caponiers*, by which one part of the works communicated with the other, and had thrown up traverſes, to prevent the exe-

* "Paſſages ten or twelve feet wide, made from one "work to another, covered on each ſide by a parapet "terminating in a ſlope or glacis."

Muller's Elements of Fortification.

cution of ſhells and ricochét ſhot, which was to be apprehended.

The garriſon conſiſted of about one hundred and fifty men of the firſt battalion of Delancey's, with two hundred of the ſecond battalion of New Jerſey Volunteers. Theſe corps having been raiſed in the year 1776, were well diſciplined, and, from the active ſervices in which they had been engaged, ever ſince their firſt landing in Georgia, had become equal to any troops. To theſe were added about two hundred loyal militia, under Colonel King. Motives of policy, as well as humanity, induced Lieutenant Colonel Cruger to adviſe the latter to quit the garriſon, and, as they were provided with good horſes, to effect their retreat, either to Charleſtown or to Georgia, for he apprehended, that in caſe of a long ſiege, their numbers might cauſe a want of proviſions; and he knew, that no capitulation, for ſecuring to thoſe unfortunate men the rights of war, obſerved by

by civiliſed nations, could be depended upon; but theſe Loyaliſts, though in a manner fighting with halters around their necks, were not to be diſmayed; they turned their horſes into the woods, made a point of remaining with the garriſon and abiding by its fate.

One hundred and fifty regulars, with fifty militia men, were ſelected to occupy the STAR, and the commandant manifeſted his uſual judgment in committing the defence of this important place to MAJOR GREEN of Delancey's. Having placed a Captain's party and ſome militia in the ſtockade upon the left, a ſubaltern's guard in the priſon, and having aſſigned proper diviſions to the ſeveral block houſes, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger reſerved the remainder of the troops under his own immediate command in the village.

As there were only three three-pounders, a very ſmall quantity of ammunition

for theſe guns, and but one matroſs in the garriſon, the want of artillery was ſeverely felt. Some of the ſoldiers of the two battalions, who had ſerved as matroſſes at the ſiege of Savannah, were again attached to the cannon, but the deficiency of ammunition was irremediable.

Still, after the utmoſt efforts of the troops, when the advanced corps of the enemy appeared, upon the 21ſt of May, the works were far from being finiſhed, even the platforms in the Star were not in a condition to receive guns.

The whole American army, amounting to upwards of four thouſand men, with a reſpectable park of field artillery, encamped in a wood within cannon ſhot of the village. Fluſhed with ſucceſs from the reduction of a number of the Britiſh poſts, they, with a contemptuouſneſs to the garriſon of Ninety Six, to this day unexplained, in the night between the

21ſt and 22d threw up two works, at no greater diſtance than ſeventy paces from the Star. General Greene did not even condeſcend to ſummon the place. Whether he meant to aſſault and reduce it by a coup de main, or deſigned theſe works for places of arms, is another point as yet undetermined. It can hardly be conceived that his engineer, Kozinſco, a foreign adventurer, whom *they* created a Count of Poland, would break ground, and begin a ſap, within ſo ſmall a diſtance of a regular fortification, if he had intended its reduction by the common mode of approaches.

By eleven o'clock in the morning of the 22d of May, the platform in the ſalient angle of the Star, neareſt to the Americans, was completed, and mounted with guns, to fire en barbet. Theſe, with inceſſant platoons of muſquetry, played on the works conſtructed by the enemy the preceding night, under cover of which, thirty men, marching in In-

dian-file, entered them, and put every man they could reach to the bayonet. This party was immediately followed by another of the loyal militia, who, in an inſtant, levelled thoſe works, and loaded a number of negroes with the entrenching tools of the Americans. Though General Greene put his whole army in motion to ſupport the advanced corps, they were intirely routed before he could effect his deſign. The handful of brave men that performed this ſervice, retired into the Star, without any loſs, excepting that of the officer who led them, Lieutenant Roney. He was mortally wounded, and died the following night, much eſteemed, and juſtly lamented.

From ſuch a check, the American commander began to entertain a reſpectable idea of the troops with whom he had to contend. On the night of the 23d the Americans again broke ground, but at the diſtance of four hundred paces from the Star, and behind a ravine.

They

They here began two ſaps; erected block batteries to cover them, and appointed two brigades for their ſupport. Sorties by ſmall parties were made during the night, to interrupt the enemy, and retard their approaches. Theſe were occaſionally continued for the reſt of the ſiege, notwithſtanding which, by inceſſant labour, and the numbers employed, the beſiegers had completed a ſecond parallel by the 3d of June, when, for the firſt time, they beat the chamade, and their Adjutant General advanced with a flag of truce, deſiring to ſpeak to the commandant. Lieutenant Stelle, the officer on duty, who met him, obſerved, that it was unuſual for commanding officers to receive and anſwer flags of truce in perſon, but that if he had any thing to communicate to Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, it ſhould be forwarded. The American officer then produced a paper, ſigned by himſelf, ſetting forth, with the higheſt eulogiums, the invincible gallantry of their troops; enumerating their recent

conqueſts "upon the Congaree, the "Wateree, and the Santee *;" declaring that the garriſon had every thing to hope from their generoſity, and to fear from their reſentment; making the commandant *perſonally* reſponſible for a fruitleſs reſiſtance, and demanding an immediate and unconditional ſurrender to the army of the United States of America. He farther proteſted, that this ſummons ſhould not be repeated, nor any flag of truce hereafter received, without it conveyed the preliminary propoſals for a capitulation.

The commandant directed an officer to inform the perſon who brought this extraordinary paper, that, Ninety Six was committed to his charge, and that both duty and inclination pointed to the propriety of defending it to the laſt ex-

* The two firſt of theſe are only branches of the latter—but a climax ſo pompous correſponded with the reſt of the language of this ſummons.

tremity.

tremity. He added, that the promiſes and threats of General Greene were alike indifferent to him.

The truce therefore ceaſed; the enemy immediately opened four batteries; commenced a heavy croſs fire, which enfiladed ſome of the works, and continued this cannonade at intervals for ſeveral days, at the ſame time puſhing a ſap againſt the Star, and advancing batteries. One of theſe conſtructed of faſcines and gabions, at no greater diſtance than thirty-five paces from the abbatis, was elevated forty feet from the earth; upon it a number of rifleмen were ſtationed, who, as they overlooked the Britiſh works, did great execution. The garriſon crowned their parapet with ſand-bags, leaving apertures through which the Loyal militia fired their rifles with good effect. African arrows* were thrown by the

* Theſe were arrows fitted to the bore of muſquets from which they were diſcharged. They were entwined

beſiegers on the roofs of the Britiſh barracks to ſet them on fire, but this deſign was immediately counteracted by Lieut. Col. Cruger; who directed all the buildings to be unroofed, an order which, though it expoſed both officers and men to the bad effects of the night air, ſo pernicious in this climate, was obeyed with an alacrity that nothing but their confidence in him could inſpire.

With the intention to burn the rifle battery of the aſſailants, attempts were made to heat ſhot, but theſe were fruſtrated for want of furnaces; the beſieged therefore in the Star, being no longer able to continue with the cannon on the platforms in the day time, they were diſmounted, and uſed only in the night.

twined with flax, dipped in combuſtibles lighted, and armed at the end with a barbed ſpear. Captain M'Pherſon of Delancey's had defended Fort Motte with admirable gallantry, but his barracks being ſet on fire by theſe arrows, he was compelled to ſurrender.

On the 8th of June, the garriſon had the mortification to ſee that of Auguſta marched by them priſoners of war. Though the gallantry diſplayed by Lieutenant Colonel Brown in its defence, would have excited admiration in a generous foe, Colonel Lee, by whom they were taken, enjoyed the gratification of a little mind in exhibiting them before Ninety Six, with a Britiſh ſtandard reverſed, drums beating and fifes playing, to ridicule their ſituation. This pitiful recourſe had an effect quite contrary to that which it was intended to produce. The ſoldiers were eaſily convinced by their officers, that death was preferable to captivity with ſuch an enemy. Having enjoyed this triumph, Colonel Lee, with his corps called the legion, next ſat down to reduce the ſtockade upon the left, which preſerved a communication with the water; his approaches, however, commenced at a reſpectful diſtance, and his advances by ſap were conducted with extreme caution, while the operations of

General

General Greene were directed againſt the Star.

On the evening of the 9th of June, in the apprehenſion that ſomething extraordinary was carrying on in the enemy's works, two ſallies, with ſtrong parties, were made. One of theſe entering their trenches upon the right, and penetrating to a battery of four guns, were prevented from deſtroying them for want of ſpikes and hammers. They here diſcovered the mouth of a mine, deſigned to be carried under a curtain of the Star, upon ſpringing of which the breach was to be entered by the American army, ſword in hand. The other diviſion that marched upon the left fell in with the covering party of the beſiegers, a number of whom were put to the bayonet, and the officer who commanded them brought in priſoner. Both diviſions returned to the garriſon with little loſs, though it was impoſſible for that of the enemy not to have been conſiderable. Never did luckleſs

luckleſs wight receive a more inglorious wound, upon any occaſion, than Count Kozinſco did on this—it was in that part which Hudibras has conſtituted the ſeat of honour, and was given juſt as this engineer was examining the mine which he had projected!

Colonel Lee continued his approaches to the ſtockade upon the left, before which his corps ſuffered greatly. On the 12th of June, in a paroxyſm of temerity and folly, he directed a ſerjeant and ſix men, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, to advance with lighted combuſtibles, and ſet fire to the abbatis of the work which he had inveſted. Not one of them returned to upbraid him with his raſhneſs, and he was the firſt to ſolicit a truce to bury the bodies of the men he had ſo ſcandalouſly ſacrificed. Having now redoubled his efforts, and mounted a number of cannon, which followed him from Auguſta, he completely enfiladed this work, by a trian-

gular

gular fire, and by the 17th of June rendered it untenable. It was evacuated in the night without loſs, and taken poſſeſſion of by the enemy.

The ſufferings of the garriſon were now extreme. With infinite labour a well was dug in the Star, but water was not to be obtained, and the only means of procuring this neceſſary element in a torrid climate in the month of June, was to ſend out naked negroes, who brought a ſcanty ſupply from within piſtol ſhot of the American pickets, their bodies not being diſtinguiſhable in the night from the fallen trees, with which the place abounded.

Far from deſpondence in this extremity, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger encouraged the troops, in the hope of relief from the arrival of an army, before the enemy, though already advanced in their third parallel, could poſſibly reach the ditch. From the treatment of their fellow

low ſoldiers captured at Auguſta, he painted to them, in the ſtrongeſt colours, the mortifying conſequences of a ſurrender; but, if they continued their defence, he had not the leaſt doubt of their having the honour of brightening the future proſpects of the Royal army in thoſe provinces.

Whilſt the commandant was uſing theſe endeavours, an American Loyaliſt, in open day, under the fire of the enemy, rode through their pickets, and delivered a verbal meſſage from Lord Rawdon, "That he had paſſed Orangeburg, and "was in full march to raiſe the ſiege." The name of RAWDON inflamed every breaſt with additional vigour; they declared they would wait patiently for the aſſailants, and meet them even in the ditch. How well they kept their word the tranſactions of the 18th will ſhew.

On

On the morning of this day the third parallel of the beſiegers was completed; they turned the abbatis, drew out the pickets, and brought forward two trenches within ſix feet of the ditch of the Star. General Greene, well informed of the advance of Lord Rawdon, and knowing that the garriſon was equally appriſed of it, determined upon a general aſſault, which he commenced at noon.

Their forlorn hopes, in two diviſions, made a lodgement in the ditch, and were followed by ſtrong parties with grappling hooks to draw down the ſandbags, and tools to reduce the parapet. The rifleſmen, poſted upon their elevated battery, picked off every Britiſh ſoldier that appeared, while the Virginian and Maryland lines fired by platoons from their trenches. The right flank of the enemy was expoſed to the fire of a three-pounder, as well as to that of the block houſes in the village, and Major Green with the troops in the Star, waited with

with coolneſs to receive them on the parapet, with bayonets and ſpears *. The attack continued, but the main body of the Americans could not be brought forward to the aſſault; they were contented with ſupporting the parties in the ditch, by an inceſſant fire from the lines. At length the garriſon became impatient. Two parties under Captain Campbell of the New Jerſey Volunteers, and Captain French of Delancey's, iſſued from the ſally port in the rear of the Star, they entered the ditch, divided their men, and advanced, puſhing their bayonets till they met each other. This was an effort of gallantry that the Americans could not have expected. General Greene, from one of the advanced batteries, with aſtoniſhment beheld two

* Spears reſembling thoſe uſed in boarding ſhips, had been made by the direction of this excellent officer; they were piled againſt the parapet, and the men were ordered, on diſcharging their muſquets, to uſe the ſpears.

parties,

parties, conſiſting only of thirty men each, ſallying into a ditch, charging and carrying every thing before them, though expoſed to the fire of a whole army. It was an exertion of officers leading troops, ardent in the cauſe of their ſovereign, and ſteeled with the remembrance of injuries which they and their connections had ſo often received from the ſubverters of law and good government. The Americans covered their ſhame in the trenches, nor was it till the next day that they recollected themſelves ſo far as to aſk permiſſion to bury their dead; the groans alſo of their wounded aſſailed their ears, and called aloud for that relief which ought to have been much earlier adminiſtered.

General Greene raiſed the ſiege upon the evening of the 19th, and on the morning of the 21ſt the army under Lord Rawdon made its appearance. His Lordſhip brought with him the flank companies

companies of three* regiments, which had landed from Europe ſo late as the third of the ſame month, and thus reinforced, he had made the moſt rapid marches over a deſert country, in the hotteſt weather, for the relief of the garriſon. This, however, did not prevent his Lordſhip from an immediate purſuit of the enemy. He followed them over the Saluda, as far as the banks of the Enoree, but they had ſo much the ſtart of him, and their flight was ſo precipitate, as to leave no poſſibility of being overtaken.

The hardſhips under which this little garriſon had laboured were ſevere in the extreme. The defence of a place ſo weak and ill provided, for upwards of thirty days, with no more than three hundred and fifty regulars, and two hundred militia, againſt an army well appointed, in high ſpirits, and in poſſeſſion

* 3d, 19th, and 30th.

of every advantage that the ſituation could admit, was not to be effected without the utmoſt patience, vigilance, and vigorous exertion. Before the appearance of the Americans, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger had uſed every means in his power to augment his magazine of proviſions; but the ſalting of beef and pork, which were the only articles, Indian corn excepted, that could be procured, was rendered almoſt ineffectual both by the ſeaſon and climate. The climate was that of latitude 32° N—the ſeaſon approaching the ſummer ſolſtice. In ſpite therefore of all precaution, the proviſions in one degree or other became putrid. Yet even this, at leaſt, towards the latter end of the ſiege, was much leſs diſtreſſing than the want of water.

It would be preſumption in me, nay, it would require the abilities of an able writer, to appropriate to each officer concerned in this defence, the degree of praiſe due to his merit, and yet, after the account

juſt

juſt now given, it would be unpardonable to paſs them over in ſilence.

The foreſight, precaution, bravery, and in every reſpect good conduct of Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, have obtained that general admiration which they deſerved. The ſpeech of General Sir George Howard * does no more than juſtice to the diſtinguiſhed merit of Major Green, and it will afford peculiar pleaſure to every individual of this garriſon into whoſe hands that part of parliamentary hiſtory may fall. The officers in the Star did not loſe one of the many opportunities which occurred to ſignaliſe themſelves. Lieutenant Barreté, of the 23d regiment, acted as engineer with great zeal. In one word, every officer received the warmeſt approbation of his conduct from Lord Rawdon and Lieutenant Colonel Cruger,

* Vide the Debates in the Houſe of Commons of the 27th of June 1783: the Houſe in committee on the ſubject of Provincial half pay.

nor did they aſpire to a more honourable teſtimony of their merit.

Lieutenant Roney, of Delancey's, with three ſerjeants, and twenty-three rank and file, were killed. Captains French and Smith of Delancey's, Captain Barbarie and Lieut. Hatton, of the New Jerſey Volunteers, with five ſerjeants and forty-nine rank and file, were wounded. The enemy acknowledged the loſs of one Colonel, three Captains, five Lieutenants, and one hundred and fifty-ſeven privates, killed and wounded; but as their returns did not include the militia, who on this occaſion bore the proportion of three to one to the troops in the pay of Congreſs, there can be no doubt but their loſs amounted to treble that number in this memorable ſiege,—a ſiege, which, however imperfectly known in Britain hitherto, will be remembered in America, whilſt a veſtige of the war in that country ſhall remain.

RE-CAPTURE

RE-CAPTURE

OF

NEW-PROVIDENCE.

COLONEL ANDREW DEVAUX, who planned and executed the expedition which reduced the iſland of New-Providence, is a native of the province of South Carolina, and deſcended from a reſpectable Hugonet family of Brittany, which left that country upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz.

When the Britiſh army, under Major General Prevoſt, advanced to Charleſtown, in the year 1779, Andrew Devaux, ſenior, and his ſon, then about eighteen years of age, joined it. The latter was ſoon particularly noticed by that diſtinguiſhed officer, Lieutenant Colonel the Honourable John Maitland. After the death of his patron, young Devaux accompanied the Royal army on its entrance into South Carolina the following year; and, by ſupplying guides and proviſions, became of eſſential ſervice. Having raiſed two independent troops of dragoons, he received from Earl Cornwallis the rank of Major of Provincials, and, ſoon after, the appointment of Lieutenant Colonel to the Grenville county militia. With theſe, and a number of volunteers, who placed themſelves under his command, he made ſeveral ſucceſsful incurſions, and penetrated into the heart of the country; nor did he diſcontinue theſe exertions till after the contraction of the Britiſh lines to the vicinity of Charleſtown,

town, when the neceſſity for that kind of operation being at an end, his corps was diſbanded.

This enterpriſing young man ſtill found a mode to render himſelf uſeful. As the forces under Major General Leſlie remained upon the defenſive, Colonel Devaux, authoriſed by the Court of Vice-Admiralty, fitted out two armed veſſels, and from his perfect acquaintance with the numerous inlets with which that coaſt is indented, he in ſeveral deſcents brought in quantities of freſh proviſions and forage, which ſerved equally to ſupply the garriſon and diſtreſs the enemy.

In one of theſe expeditions he entered the inlet of Oſebaugh in Georgia, landed and deſtroyed two gallies which were building for the Congreſs, together with their whole naval yard at Beaulie, though a large body of Americans was ſtationed within a few miles of that place. Upon another occaſion he penetrated up Broad-River inlet, and, taking a circuitous route, ſurpriſed

ſurpriſed and made priſoners Brigadier General Harding, with eleven officers, and brought off a number of dragoon horſes. He alſo landed on the iſland of Port Royal, which he took poſſeſſion of, and delivered to a detachment of the King's troops ſent to receive it; when theſe were withdrawn, which happened ſome time after, he, in a ſecond deſcent, made Brigadier General Barnwell, his Aid-de-Camp, and a number of others, priſoners.

After the Britiſh army, in the month of December 1782, had abandoned the province of South Carolina, Colonel Devaux proceeded to the harbour of Saint Auguſtine in Eaſt Florida, the only port upon that part of the coaſt which remained occupied by a Britiſh garriſon. Here, having gained intelligence of the ſupine and defenceleſs ſtate of Don Galvez, the Spaniſh Governor of Weſt Florida, and of the affection of the Creek, Choctaw, Chickaſaw, and Cherokee Indians

dians to the Britiſh intereſt, he meditated the deſign of attacking Penſacola; but as no aſſiſtance could be afforded him from Eaſt Florida, upon account of the continual inroads of the Americans acroſs the Altamaha, this intention was laid aſide; and though the ſame reaſons operated with equal force againſt another expedition, which he planned for the reduction of the iſland of New-Providence, he however carried it into execution.

It may be neceſſary to premiſe, that this is the principal in a chain of ſmall iſlands, extending along the gulph of Florida, called BAHAMAS; that it had ſome time before been ſubjugated to the crown of Spain; that the poſſeſſion of it is valuable in the time of war, from its affording an harbour for veſſels, which may be employed, either to check the trade of the continent of America, of the iſlands of Cuba, and Hiſpaniola, or to intercept the Spaniſh flota from Vera-

Vera-Cruz; and that it is alſo an object of attention in times of peace, appears, from the preſent appointment of a nobleman of diſtinction to its government *.

After the capture of this iſland by the Spaniards, the Britiſh inhabitants who remained there, complained loudly of great oppreſſion, in conſequence of infractions of the capitulation. Many merchants had been deprived of their property, and their perſons confined at the Havannah: others had fled to Eaſt Florida. Information communicated by the latter, gave Colonel Devaux reaſon to expect ſome aid from the inhabitants of the Bahamas; for the neceſſary equipment and ſupport of ſuch of thoſe as might be diſpoſed to join him, he provided arms, regimentals, and proviſions. Seventy men, who had formerly ſerved

* Earl of Dunmore.

under

under him in the Carolinas, were again aſſociated, and put on board ſix ſmall veſſels. "The little remnants of his "ſhattered fortune, and all that he could "raiſe on his credit, was embarked on "this expedition*." On the 30th of March, 1783, he ſailed under the convoy of ſome private ſhips of war, the Perſeverance of twenty-ſix guns, the Witby Warrior of ſixteen guns; the former commanded by a Mr. Dow, the latter by a Mr. Wheeler; and two ſmall armed veſſels.

Four days after their departure they diſcovered two large ſhips to windward, ſtanding towards them. A ſtout reſiſtance might have been made, provided that the armed veſſels of the fleet had formed in line of battle, but Colonel Devaux had the mortification to ſee the Perſeverance and Witby Warrior, which was the only force that could now be

* Political Magazine, 1783.

depended upon, bear away before the wind. His apprehenſions, however, upon this occaſion, were converted into an agreeable ſurpriſe, when he found that the ſtrange ſhips, though under foreign colours, were two Engliſh letters of marque from Jamaica, homeward bound. After ſpeaking with them he proceeded, and the next day the whole fleet rendezvouſed at the Hole-in-the-Rock, in the bay of Abacco*, with no other loſs than that of a large boat, conſtructed for debarkation, which had foundered at ſea.

As the whole ſucceſs of the enterpriſe evidently depended upon taking every advantage which ſurpriſe and ſtratagem might preſent, guard-boats were immediately ſtationed at all the avenues leading towards the enemy. Colonel Devaux landed on Harbour Iſland, and detached to the iſland of Eluthera, with directions for recruiting, Captain

* Another of the Bahama Iſlands, about twenty leagues diſtant from Naſſau.

Mackenzie,

Mackenzie, who had been particularly ſerviceable during the whole of this expedition. The exertions of this gentleman, with thoſe of Captain Higgs of the Harbour-Iſland militia, procured the addition of one hundred and ſeventy men; theſe were equipped with the arms and regimentals provided in Florida; and the cordial reception given by the iſlanders, ſhould the primary object of the expedition fail, enſured a ſafe retreat.

The total amount of the force thus increaſed, with the addition of what was obtained from the ſhipping, was three hundred men. Fifty fiſhing boats were alſo collected, for no other purpoſe than that of deceiving the enemy into an opinion, that the real number of troops was in proportion to the ſeeming preparation for their landing. To throw the recruits into diviſions, and to give them an idea of regularity, at leaſt in the eſſentials of loading and firing, two days were employed; ſo prepared, this

little

little armament ſailed, and on the night of the 9th of April, arrived at Egg Iſland, three leagues diſtant from Fort-Montague upon New-Providence, and about five from Fort-Naſſau.

The firſt mentioned fort, mounted with thirteen nine-pounders, garriſoned by fifty men, under the command of the Spaniſh Lieutenant Governor, and ſupported by two heavy gallies, moored in the channel, completely covered the Eaſtern entrance of the harbour.

Diſpoſitions for the attack, both of Fort-Montague and the gallies, were made on the 10th at day break; they were conducted in this manner: Major Taylor was detached with ſeventy men to board the gallies, while Colonel Devaux landed with one hundred and fifty men to attack the fort: he was, however, diſcovered by the Spaniſh centinels on the beating of the revellié. Boats were continually rowed to and from the

the ſhipping, while the advanced party of the corps which had landed, marched with faſcines and ſcaling ladders, leaving large intervals between the diviſions, and preſenting a very extended front. All this was done for the purpoſe of impreſſing the enemy with an idea, that a whole army had arrived to reduce them. The deception ſucceeded; the Spaniards ſpiked the cannon, laid a train to the magazine, abandoned Fort-Montague, and filed off towards Fort-Naſſau. The Britiſh purſued, and charged them with vivacity; the enemy left ſome men upon the ground, and retreated in great diſorder. Colonel Devaux halted, entered the fort, and, by means of a priſoner whom he had taken, diſcovering that a match had been laid to the magazine, found he had come early enough to extinguiſh it. Three cheers from that part of his troops who were now in poſſeſſion of the fort, were anſwered by the diviſion under Major Taylor, who,

at the ſame inſtant, had boarded the gallies.

After making ſome neceſſary arrangements, Colonel Devaux ſent a ſummons to DON ANTONIO CLARACO SANZ, the Spaniſh Governor, acquainting him, that being inveſted both by ſea and land, and that, as no hopes of a ſucceſsful reſiſtance was left, his only reſource was an immediate ſurrender to the troops of his Britannick Majeſty. To this Don Antonio refuſed his aſſent; he at the ſame time intimated his wiſhes, that the Britiſh troops, deſiſting from further operations, ſhould remain in quiet poſſeſſion of the fort which they had taken, and its vicinity, until the twentieth day of the month, at which time he had reaſon to believe that hoſtilities would ceaſe between the ſubjects of England and Spain.

Upon the thirtieth of March, when this armament ſailed from Eaſt Florida, they

they had received no intelligence of a peace; the two letters of marque already mentioned, which had then juſt ſailed from Jamaica, were equally ignorant of ſuch an event, nor were three veſſels from Philadelphia, which had been captured, in poſſeſſion of any ſuch information. From theſe facts, therefore, it was reaſonable to conclude, that this account of Don Antonio was a ſubterfuge to ſave his garriſon, for if, at that time, he had had authentick advice of an accommodation between the belligerent powers, he had only to produce a copy of the treaty, or the preliminary articles, and the farther operations of the aſſailants would of courſe have terminated. The true ſtate of the matter, as it afterwards appeared, was, that hoſtilities were to ceaſe in that quarter upon the ninth, inſtead of the twentieth of April, of which, however, both parties, at this time, had been equally ignorant.

After leaving a detachment in Fort Montague, the reſt of the Britiſh forces took poſt upon the White-Grounds, within cannon ſhot of the Spaniſh lines, having driven in a party which occupied that place. In reconnoitring, landing cannon, training the recruits, and other ſervices, two days were employed, under a random cannonade, and diſcharge of ſhells from the enemy's batteries.

Suſpecting an intention in the Britiſh to poſſeſs themſelves of Society Hill, which commanded his works, Don Antonio formed an ambuſcade, with forty men, amongſt the underwood which covered its ſummit. This was diſcovered, and the troops, making a detour of the hill, attacked the Spaniards, who, with the loſs of two officers and ſix men, effected a retreat.

On the 13th of April the Governor requeſted an interview with the Britiſh

Britiſh Commander, and under the plauſible pretence of guarding againſt depredation on private property, propoſed a truce; but his real motive was to gain time.

Upon this occaſion, the whole of the troops that were landed were drawn up under arms, ſo as to reſemble a picket only. Drums, fifes, and bugle horns, with warlike Indian muſick, were heard in ſeveral parts of the iſland, as if proceeding from different encampments, and two Cherokee and Choctaw Chiefs, as repreſentatives of their reſpective tribes, were introduced to Don Antonio, for the purpoſe of alarming him with apprehenſions, that two nations of ſavages were employed againſt him. A truce of twenty-four hours, to deliberate on propoſals for ſurrender, was requeſted by the Governor. To this Colonel Devaux aſſented, as it ſerved to give his men reſt after great fatigue, and to procure time for the arrival of one of his veſſels, which had

had been on a cruize at the time of his departure, and which he was in hourly expectation of, with a reinforcement of forty men; but the Spaniards being diſcovered in the courſe of the night improving their fortifications, a meſſage was therefore ſent them, that they had violated the truce, and that it conſequently ceaſed. They immediately commenced a heavy cannonade on Society Hill, and threw a number of ſhells in that direction, notwithſtanding which the Britiſh troops, aſſiſted by a party of negroes under Mr. Romer, with infinite labour, drew ſeven pieces of cannon up the hill, and mounted them in embraſures cut out of the ſolid rock.

The Spaniards made a ſortie in the night, but were repulſed with loſs. Upon the 14th, having withdrawn the whole of their force from Fort Naſſau, and the other out-poſts, they retired into the citadel, at the ſame time cutting the cables of four large gallies in the harbour, which

which conſequently drifted upon the ſhore. On the 17th a morning gun was fired from the Britiſh batteries on the Hill, and Don Antonio was ſummoned for the laſt time to ſurrender. He immediately propoſed terms, to which it was thought prudent to aſſent.

A Governor, Lieutenant Governor, thirty-ſix Majors, Captains and ſubalterns, with ſix hundred Spaniſh troops, were made priſoners. Upwards of one hundred pieces of cannon, mortars and howitzers, and a quantity of military ſtores, fell into the hands of the captors.

By the ſecond article of the capitulation, the garriſon was to be permitted to depart for Cuba, and the Governor to Spain, but Colonel Devaux detained Don Antonio and five of the principal officers as hoſtages, till an equal number of Britiſh merchants, inhabitants of New-Providence, who, in violation of the former capitulation,

capitulation, were in dungeons in the Havannah, were liberated.

The troops took poſſeſſion of the town and citadel of Naſſau amidſt the acclamations of the inhabitants, who addreſſed their deliverer in the moſt grateful terms, extolling that zeal for his Majeſty's ſervice, and compaſſion for the diſtreſſed inhabitants, which had prompted him, at his own private expence, to undertake an expedition for their relief, and paying him the higheſt encomiums on the bravery, vigilance and ſkill in military ſtratagem, by which it was effected.

Diſpatches were immediately ſent to the Commander in Chief of the King's forces in America, as alſo to the Governor of Jamaica, acquainting them with the reduction of the iſland of New-Providence, and ſubmitting the future diſpoſal of it to their direction. Both theſe officers declined interfering, and recommended waiting for inſtructions from

England, the latter adding, "That he who "was capable of reducing, was certainly "equal to govern it." Colonel Devaux therefore proceeded to form the remaining Members of his Majeſty's Council into a Board of Police, for the adminiſtration of juſtice, and continued in the iſland until the month of September following, when he was complimented by the principal inhabitants, in an addreſs, teſtifying their concern at his departure, and the laſting eſteem his conduct had impreſſed upon them, pointing out his diſintereſtedneſs in declining all pecuniary emolument, and wiſhing him that approbation of a gracious ſovereign, to which his merit entitled him.

Thus was the iſland of New-Providence conquered by the exertions of a young man, then under twenty-three years of age, and a Spaniſh garriſon of ſix hundred regular troops, in ſtrong works, provided with cannon and other means of defence, made priſoners by half that

number of irregulars, deficient in diſcipline, and indifferently ſupplied with artillery, and the other requiſites of a ſiege.

The motive of the expedition was generous and noble;—the releaſe of Britiſh ſubjects from foreign oppreſſion, and the credit acquired, cannot be leſſened by the circumſtance of the conqueſt being made ſome days after hoſtilities were to ceaſe in thoſe ſeas, as all parties were alike ignorant of that regulation. The mode of conducting it would have reflected honour on any General; and it has been juſtly conſidered as "an enterpriſe, per-"haps, without a parallel in the modern "hiſtory of war."

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